The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

MR. WALTER LIPPMANN is one—and probably the most influential—of the few commentators on public affairs in the American daily press who deals with more than the surface of such affairs, and leads his readers on to consider the deeper and less obvious factors which are ignored by the vast majority of newspaper writers, and newspaper readers, too. His readers may or may not agree with his opinions, but they know that those opinions are truly philosophical, and not merely superficial and partizan. There is a consistent general view of life at the basis of his comments. In political or economic affairs, for example, Mr. Lippmann does not write as a propagandist for any special party, or particular social class. He is genuinely concerned with defending, or advancing, the general welfare. No American journalist is doing more valuable service in opposing partizan passion and in supporting the use of reason in the discussion of public questions.

These considerations give great importance to the article published by Mr. Lippmann on March 3 in the large number of journals which convey his helpful views, under the bold title of "Three Prophecies." Ordinarily, this prudent, though essentially courageous, writer does not permit himself to prophesy, but in this article he commits himself boldly to views which if he is right are most consolatory. These are as follows: first, that planned collectivism as a necessary substitute for capitalism no longer menaces the western nations; second, that the peril of dictatorial, authoritarian political régimes to representative democracy has been definitely overcome; and, finally, that although there is still imminent danger of another world war, there is still time, and a great opportunity, to avert it.

Even more interesting than Mr. Lippmann's conclusions on these three points is the major premise of his argument. "Perhaps the most im-

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portant development in the world today," he writes, "is the passing of the belief that mankind is in the grip of irresistible forces." But now mankind has recovered the belief that nothing is determined; or, rather, to quote Mr. Lippmann, "if in Washington and in London and in Paris men will recover the belief that nothing is fatally determined," then "they can save mankind from an unnecessary disaster"—that of a world war.

Christian philosophy, Christian sociology, in agreement with the unchanging teachings of Christian doctrine, firmly support this thesis laid down by Mr. Lippmann—so far as its major premise is concerned. The old popular saying of Christendom, that "where there is a will there is a way," derives from the central doctrine of Christianity, out of which all western civilization derived its principles. If the widely informed, truly thoughtful Mr. Lippmann is correct in thinking that those intellectual leaders of the western world who only a few years ago felt that the breakdown of our civilization was fatally determined, have thrown off the obsession of the philosophy of doom and fate and have returned to free will, a spiritual revolution has occurred which is what he declares it to be, namely, "the most important development in the world today."

Speaking for ourselves, however, much as we desire that Mr. Lippmann's optimistic prophecies may be realized, we cannot wholly agree with him. For example, when he says that "the capitalist system, far from having come to its end, is having an impressive recovery throughout the world," in all the democratic countries, outside of the dictatorial economies of Russia and Germany and Italy, with the exception of France, we wonder how Mr. Lippmann could justify that statement. In Great Britain and the United States, to mention only the two greatest countries where capitalism has been flourishing for a century or less, can we still call the system precariously functioning by the name of capitalism—the very essence of which has always been the greatest achievable amount of individualistic competition—when governmental supports and subsidies are upholding it at almost all points? And when all these countries have what now appear to be great masses of permanently unemployed, the care for whose bare subsistence has become an integral part of government? And when, because of these conditions, and many others that might be discussed, personal and corporate liberties are steadily being lessened? We may call such an economic condition "capitalism," because the outer forms of capitalism are more or less still preserved, and because a real definition has not yet been formulated, but what we are witnessing, it seems to us, is not a recovery of classic capitalism, but rather a new thing, as yet a hodge-podge of conflicting principles, and dicordant methods, the final form of which is unpredictable. And in general, the same thing may be said of our political conditions. What we meant by representative democracy, before the World War, is still precariously holding together, so far as its exterior mechanism is concerned, outside of the lands where dictatorships and totalitarian states have been set up; but the strange, hybrid types of government which actually have taken the place of the former system are as yet nameless. The names of the old systems are still employed, but those systems are really gone.

But at least Mr. Lippmann is perfectly right in pointing out that the rush toward dictatorships has been halted, if not finally defeated; and that what for want of a better name we still call the capitalistic system is more than holding its own against collectivistic systems, and that there is still a great opportunity to save the world from war if the leaders of society are really bent upon doing so. The will of mankind, if led in the right directions, can accomplish that—and can bring about economic restoration as well. But they cannot do so unless they call back the Catholic Church from its exiled condition, and restore the sanity of Christian thought to its proper place amid the councils of the statesmen of the world. That would be a spiritual revolution.

Week by Week

The Trend of Events

GOVERNMENT spending occupied the foreground as the President sent Congress a demand for $1,137,000,000 in new taxes, with some specific recommendations as to how the money is to be raised. The pill is a bitter one to swallow in an election year, but the outlawing of AAA and the order to pay the bonus in cash left the government no alternative. It seemed unlikely that higher income levies would be resorted to, and guesses as to what Congress might decide to do were many. But if the new taxes are actually raised, the federal budget will be balanced excepting for relief expenditures to be made after sums now allocated are spent. Republican strategy seemed to imply an attack not on spending as such but on the "political" uses to which spending has allegedly been put. Governor Landon's radio address charged the relief administration with partizanship, waste and incompetence. Fuel was added to the fire by an attack on patronage in the guise of WPA relief by Senator Rush Dew Holt, West Virginia Democrat, who asserted that the party machine in his state controlled the award of relief jobs with an iron hand. But though the Senator's remarks caused a great flutter, it seemed improbable that a Senate inquiry into the existing situation would be authorized. No system of public works anywhere has been

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free of graft, and the record in some European countries is notorious. Doubtless the United States has had as efficient an administration of the funds as is consonant with the circumstances and with the political traditions of the nation. Control is better in some places; worse in others. The time-honored weaknesses of human nature are never more evident than when a government has money to spend.

NEWS such as was dispatched from Tokyo during the past week is not unparalled in the East. Time and time again military groups claiming to be the legitimate interpreters of imperial policy have assassinated civilians adjudged betrayers of tradition. Nevertheless the revolt now ended was in several respects a new thing and even a portent. It followed an election which emphasized Japan's increasing desire for a more liberal social order, concerned primarily with the welfare of the masses and determined to regard the military power as an instrument and not the ultimate purpose of the state. We Americans have not sufficiently heeded this development. Such news as Mr. Kagawa has brought, for example, came almost as a shock, so different was it from the impressions of Nipponese ambition generally in vogue. The military uprising which cost the lives of several Cabinet ministers and possibly of many other citizens was a reaction against all this, and a reaction of a definitely "Fascist" character, the word "Fascist" being used here in a theoretical rather than a concretely Italian sense. It was engineered by men who planned to strike ruthlessly at the leadership of a genuinely insurgent liberalism, in the name of ancient Japanese doctrines but really with the idea of beginning to effect the creation of a complete national war-machine to which each individual in the nation would be subservient. The belief that only in this way can Russia be subdued, and the Orient mastered has spread in Japan as in Germany.

Strange Portents in the East

CONSIDERING that belief, one cannot help deciding that a fundamental cause of the present absolutism of the rearmament dictators is the post-revolutionary history of the Soviets. The Russian government was established as a republic concerned above all with the progress of the workers in a purely worker state. Yet almost immediately its rulers began to plan a nationalist expansion and to create huge though probably unwieldy armies. Gradually the soldier caste became the privileged and dominant class. Though observers of life under the Soviets differ on many matters, there is almost universal agreement that the Russian military forces are the strongest in the world, and that the men who comprise those forces are the recipients of such fat as the land affords. Accordingly it is easy enough to understand that the rivalry engendered by the Red armies has affected the fate of peoples throughout Asia and Europe. In view of all this one cannot help feeling that the dramatic, almost incredible escape of Premier Okada from death is also a portent. For once luck was not with the advocates of dictatorship. It must have seemed to many Japanese that his return was a symbol of their own determination to foster not a weak, spineless or utopian government, to be sure, but at least one to which no western nation could deny a regard for freedom and the law. And we shall hope that one result will be the wider appreciation by Americans of the Japanese achievement.

THE INFLAMMABLE character of much that is termed cultural activity was again demonstrated by announcements made during the week. The New York Philharmonic - Symphony Society made it known that Wilhelm Furtwaengler would serve as its general musical director during the coming year. He is undoubtedly one of the greatest living conductors—indeed, there are some who believe he surpasses Mr. Toscanini himself. But ever since 1933, Herr Furtwaengler has been the most important cultural prop of the Nazi régime. His name has been the chief attraction on the several manifestos of loyalty to Hitler which have been signed by assorted German intellectual leaders. Though he once came to the verge of a break over Goebbels's definition of what music ought to be, and though he is doubtless a sincere German patriot rather than a fire-eating professor of Wotanism, Furtwaengler's record in the face of the outrages committed against a number of great musicians is not good. Just why the Philharmonic overlooked all these matters is not clear. Surely its directors must realize, quite apart from their personal sentiments, that the name of such a man must be a red rag flaunted before the Jewish population and an insult to countless other people who treasure freedom of conscience and intellectual decency. Can one look upon the appointment as anything short of an endorsement of Nazi attacks upon what after all we may term Christian culture? Equally grave is the acceptance by Columbia University of an invitation to the 550th anniversary of Heidelberg. Or possibly still more grave. One might doubt the Hitlerism of Herr Furtwaengler. But it is surely obvious that the Heidelberg affair is a venture in propaganda pure and simple. The ceremonies are to gloss over what Nazism has done to the German universities—and that record might well keep Dr. Butler awake nights—and to indicate the cultural solidarity that exists between the new German

What Is Nazi Propaganda?

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education and that prevailing throughout the rest of the world. So surprised are we by this action on the part of Columbia that we shall await further information and return to the point again.

Soak the Chain Stores

THE ROBINSON-PATMAN anti-chain store bill is designed to check the advantages which large retailers can get over independent merchants by shifting their vast weight around in the market place. In England there is agitation for a royal commission to investigate the same problem: the threat to private traders presented by "departmental" and "multiple" stores, and by cooperative societies. We believe there are many sound reasons for rejecting a "soak the chains" legislative crusade, in spite of the direct emotional appeal its advocates address to "little fellows" like us and to those who desire, as we do, widespread real economic power and property. Perhaps the most obvious danger in an unwise anti-chain store legal barrage is the threat to the highly beneficent and hopeful cooperative movement through the penalizing of bulk as such. The danger most difficult to express but likely the most menacing of all is the added artificiality and confusion brought to political and economic organization. The same people who deplore the capture of the grand old free market by "monopolistic" chain stores, would cure things by making laws against an open market determination of the prices which chains get down so very low. Giving up the indubitably unsound notion that the market justly determines fair cost and fair price, they seem to take up a still more unsound one: that a special group shall secure for itself a pleasant level of profits by checking costs and prices through the fiat of political laws, regardless of economic tendencies or of the common good of producers and consumers in general. The common good (or weal) is apparently supposed to be found when all special groups have had their chances at setting up statutory conditions that specially favor them. This is an inorganic, fantastically a puzzle-picture and indeed an impossible view of political economy.

Headline Revision

AN AMUSING innovation was launched recently when the New York Film Critics assembled to bestow their official accolade upon certain motion-picture personages for their work during the past year. The occasion was evidently much more informal than parallel occasions usually are; at any rate, news reports suggest that there was little of the solemn academician in the mien of the awarders, and there was plainly a good deal of jocund mirth in the accompanying festivities. But the purpose of the group was perfectly serious, and their choices for honors—Mr. Laughton and Miss Garbo for acting, and Mr. Ford for his direction of "The Informer"—will doubtless be widely approved, and meet only that minimum of challenge from informed movie-goers that any choice provokes. There is no reason, of course, why critics should not bestow medals; their title is official, not descriptive, and as a group they are no more unfriendly than any other class of humanity. In actual practise, indeed, they probably praise a good deal more than they pan—to adopt the balance of terms felicitously employed by Mr. Robert Sherwood on this occasion. But the idea, nevertheless, comes as a pleasant shock, and calls for some revision of the old classic man-dog-news headline story. In this case, the headline probably should read: "Dog Brings Man Bone."

Design for Government

THE MECHANICS of government in our American democratic republic have certainly been operated under a test condition during the past, and still present, emergency, and it is interesting to observe that apparently they have operated pretty much in the manner for which they were designed. There is wide latitude for different opinions over details and the very intensity of these opinions caused by the emergency continues a state of straining first one way and then another which gives an impression of instability though the machinery may be proving good and solid and destined to last. "The American Year Book," edited by Albert Bushnell Hart and William M. Schuyler, in its recent volume covering the past year, gives in an article by George C. S. Benson, a résumé that begins to show in perspective the functioning of our system of checks and balances in government, as needed, as these were expected to function by the founding fathers. The emergency actions of the executive were in 1935, as of course we all know, gradually and surely brought back into alignment with the designed functions of the legislative and judiciary branches. The decisions of the Supreme Court, says Mr. Benson, forced Congress to resume its responsibilities. That the President appreciates this trend is more immediately indicated by his willingness, after he has fulfilled his duty of saying what the expenses of government are, to let Congress initiate, as it is required by the Constitution, the methods of raising the new revenues. And soon now, the people themselves in a national election are to express their opinions of the custodianship of their affairs. In spite of our discouragement over specific workings of our government at times, it seems to us on the whole, as such things go, to be fairly and reasonably planned to be responsive to immediate needs and yet preserve orderly procedure.

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NIETZSCHE AND THE CRISIS

By THOMAS A. O'HARA

The professor who said of himself that he was not a man but dynamite would doubtless be astonished if he could realize the extent to which his doctrine is now a cultural force in the world. In the following paper, written by a student of philosophy who for good reasons employs a pen-name, light is thrown on the criticism of Christian ethics which modern Nietzscheans in Europe endorse. This criticism is then met with a defense of the Christian position in ethics and in historical reality.—The Editors.

WAS NIETZSCHE a philosopher or a poet? You may answer as you prefer. The history of the human mind and the history of literature are both concerned with him, since no one can neglect a personality which exerts so marked an effect upon the younger generations in Europe. It is of course true that some philosophers point out that he lacks a system and that his aphorisms might appropriately be termed belles lettres, while some literati deny that he can express himself with the plasticity of a real poet or avoid being as bombastic as a bookish clown. But, however, all this may be, the constantly growing influence of Nietzsche's thought scoffs at formalistic criticism. "I don't care whether they call him a philosopher or a poet," Benito Mussolini said to the writer of these lines, "I am sure that he is the most impressive and influential author of modern Europe."

Nietzsche was almost unknown during his lifetime and his publishers grumbled at the slow sale of his books, but the man himself never doubted the ultimate success of his work. "I am not a man," he said, "I am dynamite." He was sure not only that he would effect a "revaluation of values" but that he would be looked back upon as a turning-point in human history. "I know my destiny," he declared. "Some day my name will be bound up with the recollection of something terrific, of a crisis quite unprecedented. . . . There will be wars the like of which have never been seen on earth before. Politics on a grand scale will date from me."

When this prophecy was made in 1888 it seemed ridiculous, but now in 1936 it has a mournful gravity, which no contemporary can disregard. Never before has Nietzsche's influence been a problem of so much actuality. He predicted that his "vision" of the superman would awake the energies of the old pagan gods, still living on in slumber despite centuries of Christian teaching. The Greek god Dionysius was for him the symbol of this renaissance of paganism, being the god of orgiastic power. "Dionysius versus Christ" was the underlying theme of Nietzsche's last books.

Why did Nietzsche, the son of a Saxon pastor, hate Christianity? He was fond of this motley life; and he felt that, through the negation of every joyous and colorful thing, human existence became grey and wretched. He had become acquainted in his young years with Christianity in its most Puritan forms. The delights of mystical Christian life seem to have been unknown to him; he recognized in the faith of the Church nothing but affectation of humility and self-sacrifice; he was sure that Christian moralists would say "No" to any great passion and would deprive life of all boldness and beauty.

Therefore he turned to the ideals of human self-consciousness, of the rehabilitation of the natural instincts, of human pride and will to power. The superman became his candidate for the place of the Christian ideal of the "good" man. He was proud to call himself a pagan. "Pagans are all those who say 'Yes' to life!"

Thus the disciple of Schopenhauer absolutely contradicted his master's scale of values. He adopted Schopenhauer's theory that the will is the substance of all life on earth. But while Schopenhauer like Buddha (and, as Nietzsche erroneously maintained, also like Christ) said his "No" to the will-to-live, and to the joys and sufferings which are its inevitable consequences, Nietzsche was saying his "Yes" to life on this side the grave, like the Hindu philosophy before Buddha and the Hindu reformation against Buddha.

If the facts of suffering and death were an argument against the worth of this life for Buddha and Schopenhauer, it proves according to Nietzsche, that they were philosophers of "decadence." Birth and death, joy and sorrow, are the poles, between which the great possibilities of human life are situated; this is the "heroic philosophy" of "yea-saying." This is Nietzsche's point of view, which was formulated a decade later in the following verses by the German poet, Alfred Mombert:

> One man dies, while the other lives,
> And this makes life so beautiful and deep.

From this point of view Nietzsche thought that it would be "morbid" and "degenerate" to blame the cruelty of life: "of whom the earth is weary, away with him." Pity is a nihilistic feeling characteristic of "decadents," who "like to destroy life." Pity is a vice which enervates the energy of life: "it preserves whatever is ripe for destruction; by maintaining life in so many of the

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botched of all kinds, it gives life itself a gloomy and dubious aspect." Instead of pity Nietzsche wants abundant vitality, saying "Yes" to the heroic struggle of life.

But what softens this struggle of life, what tames this abundant vitality? Christianity, the religion of love and pity. Because of these "decadence-values" Nietzsche hates Christianity. According to him every strong and sane person should rebel against this "religion of *ressentiment*": "Christianity has the instinct of a hunter for finding out all those who may by hook or by crook be driven to despair."

What experiences prepared Nietzsche for these theories? He recognized, as all the friends of old, deep culture do, that the domination of the masses would be dangerous for the refinement of the human mind. He regarded the bitterness of the masses as the stab of a dagger to everything high and noble. The books of Renan and of other contemporary authors influenced him to consider Christianity a social revolution against the basis of Roman culture. The *Imperium Romanum*, according to Nietzsche "the most admirable of all works of art"—"that colossal edifice of meritorious, manly and noble natures"—was destroyed by the "Chandala revenge" of the Christians. "The whole labor of the ancient world gone for naught!" Nietzsche could agree with this verse of Swinburne:

> Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean:
> The world has grown grey from Thy breath.

But was Jesus really pale? Is the inner life of a Christian more monotonous than that of an egoist, who does not reckon with his responsibility for other human beings? Or has it even a richer tenor and more tensions? Does the breath of Christianity really make a grey world? Look on the cathedrals inside and outside, and no further evidence is needed. And is it really true, that the *Imperium Romanum* was destroyed by Christianity? No historical research corroborates such a theory. We know the history of this empire's decline, a history of interior rottenness, corruption of the state and of morals, infirmity of the old Roman virtues. This was not an age of vitality and of energy, as Nietzsche tries to tell us; it was a time of putridity, of despair and of pessimism; and through the glad tidings of the Gospel it received new hope, new energy, a new will to life. It was the pagan world which bore the seeds of decadence, and it was the new spring of the young religion which gave a new sense of living to the following ages.

We feel with Nietzsche that the bitterness of the masses will endanger the more refined achievements of culture. But did Christianity destroy them? Was it not Christian influence, which refined both the interior life of the individual and the relations among many individuals? Did not Christian culture produce the finest and most sublime flowers of thought and art, on the lonely summits of human existence, far away from the noise and from the masses? Christianity provides for the masses, it educates them, but it has never been subservient to the instincts of the multitude. This nineteenth-century explanation of Christianity as a social movement falsifies both the facts of history and the religious merit of the glad tidings. Jesus did not interfere in social and political changes: render to Caesar what is Caesar's. But He was interested in the soul of the individual.

Christian philosophy is perhaps the most individualistic philosophy ever extant, since it has as its central problem the relations between the soul and God. This is no mass-problem; this has nothing to do with *ressentiment*. The highest purpose of Christian faith is to give to the single soul as much of the splendor of the highest world as possible—to elevate the human being higher than his natural instincts. Is this a Chandala mentality?

Nietzsche wrongly believed that Christianity was the origin of the devaluation of human virtues—that the Christian God had "degenerated into the contradiction of life"—"instead of being its transfiguration and eternal yea." He misunderstands the fact that the Christian yes-saying of life is much deeper and brighter than the thirst for pleasure of Caesar Borgia and similar types, worshiped by Nietzsche as forerunners of his supermen.

Is it really true that Christianity killed the noble features of mankind? Is it really "noble," if the mightier one brutalizes the weaker one, who very often may be a finer and richer personality? It is a much more aristocratic attitude, I am sure, if the rich man takes care of the poor, if the holy man is not ashamed to deal with the publican and the sinners. What a perversion of taste to find more "nobility" in the recklessness and egoistic cruelty of Caesar Borgia, than in the mercy of the Saviour!

It is hard to understand how a man with such a fine sense of other souls, as Nietzsche undoubtedly had, could be blinded by his own prejudices. He Who died on the cross, Who felt responsible for human kind, was not a serf with a slave mentality. He was a Lord. The Christian feeling for the poor and unjustly treated has not, as modern socialistic feeling may have, its origin in hate; it originates from abundance of its own power. Such a mentality does not deny or weaken life, as Nietzsche erroneously claims. Love which overflows man's power, which contributes to others, is not a sign of weakness, but of sovereignty.

Is it "more blessed to give than to receive"? Is this "slave morals"? Servile characters will always like to take and never to give. Christian sacrifice, which subdues the egoistic interest, is the

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abundance of a free soul, which is too noble to be content in seeking only its own welfare. I suggest that those who waste their own powers for others are great lovers, full of the highest kind of love which human beings can feel. Without such love earth would be a battle-field of wild animals; this love gives to our life on earth something of the splendor of a higher world.

Nietzsche wants his supermen to be heroes; and Christians are for him effeminate men. This judgment may be not absolutely wrong with regard to a certain kind of up-to-date-Christian, but it is nonsense with regard to the great confessors and martyrs of Christian faith. What may be more heroic than to stand for an invisible truth against the notorious advantage in this life? Master Eckhart, the great mystical author of medieval Germany, says: "Better with Christ in hell, than without him in heaven," a sentence absolutely antagonistic to Nietzsche's conception of Christianity. Christian love burns with a positive feeling, not as a contradictory *ressentiment* against any material conditions of life. As Saint Teresa, the great Spanish saint, beautifully says:

> And if I should not hope, as I do hope,
> Nevertheless I want to love, as I do love.

Nietzsche is quite right in criticizing nineteenth-century social hatred as destructive and mean. We agree with him, that proud and self-conscious human beings are on a higher standard than those who feel hate and jealousy of the mightier one. But Nietzsche is wrong, if he blames Christianity for this mentality, which is a product of the philosophy of so-called "enlightenment" and of the French Revolution. The modern *ressentiment*, which Nietzsche detested, sprang from the ideas of 1789 and not from Christ's teachings. It is a merit of the German philosopher, Max Scheler, that he proved this fact in an admirable essay. He refuted the popular error that Christianity includes the idea that all men and races are equal. Christian philosophy according to him includes a hierarchical order of souls. The conception of paradise, purgatory and hell shows evidently enough, that men are not "equal before God," that also in the world of Christianity "spirits have their rank," as Nietzsche would say.

Nietzsche said once that the philosopher of the future should be a "tempter." He indeed was such a tempter, in proving that Christian life of his time was touched by *ressentiments* and for this he claimed that Christianity should be destroyed. His temptation has been successful; he has become the father of a heathen movement, which preaches the "virtues" of awe and self-denial and even has produced the theory that the physical force of a race deserves adoration, superior to all other valuation. That such theories are possible after nineteen centuries of Christian culture, that they find followers, not only among uneducated and half-baked people, but even among so-called educated classes, this means a very serious crisis of Christianity.

My readers know of the tragic end of Nietzsche. He was affected with paralysis, the first symptom of which we may find in the megalomania and the profuse invectives of his last works. One day in the summer of 1888 this disease overtook him in the market-place of Turin. A driver had ill-treated his horse in a very brutal way. Nietzsche went to the horse and with tears in his eyes caressed it with the brother-love of Saint Francis. He lived for twelve years after that, under the Christian care of his mother and his sister—a sick man, who fell in a dark night from the giddy heights of Lucifer.

For me this scene in the market-place of Turin is very impressive. It shows how even in this radical combatant against Christianity there sprang forth the *anima naturaliter christiana* which he had endeavored to suppress. So ended the life of the man who preached Dionysius versus Christ.

Notoriously, the tragedy of his end did not weaken the power of his thoughts. Nietzsche's influence, which had been very modest at the time of his writings, grew enormous, especially among the younger European generation. This is the front on which Christian apologetics will have to fight in our days. Here they will find a more serious enemy than scepticism and materialism have ever been. The new call of nobility touches the idealistic desire of the young generations. They should learn that the character of the true Christian is noble and heroic.

Listen, Winter

Now the wise peach tree boughs
In the air's wintry fret
Whisper the hidden blooms:
"Not yet, not yet!"

The lakes that love the sun
Are sealed in crystal night;
May's flower-varied earth
Lies blue-and-white.

The brooks are ink and pearl;
Now the wind's monotone
Carries no bells of song;
The fields are stone.

The rose within the root
Lies secret, quiet, deep;
Warm in their silken nests
The woodmice sleep.

(Let Winter while he may
Turn all the earth to metal:
Soon where he reigns shall bloom
The sunny petal!)

E. Merrill Root.

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RHODE ISLAND AND LIBERTY

By STUART D. GOULDING

THE assertion that there was no real religious liberty in the beginnings of the Rhode Island experiment has been made so often and with such vehemence in writings and addresses to the Catholic public that there is danger in it becoming regarded as fact. Nothing could be more contrary to the truth, and in the interests of fair play in this, the tercentennial year of the founding of the state, the statement calls for correction, the more especially since it is receiving circulation in a book of current popularity and in the public utterances of some of our clergy.

The assertion is based on two grounds: Roger William's known hostility to the Catholic Church; a law passed by the General Assembly of the state in 1783.

To consider the second premise first: On the statute books for February, 1783, appears this astounding law:

> Be it enacted, &c., That all the rights and privileges of the Protestant citizens of this state, as declared in and by an act made and passed the first day of March A. D. 1663 be and the same hereby are fully extended to Roman Catholic citizens; and that they being of competent estates, and of civil conversation, and acknowledging and paying obedience to the civil magistrates, shall be admitted freemen and shall have liberty to choose and be chosen civil or military leaders within this state, any exception to the said act to the contrary, notwithstanding.

It is an astounding law because it replaces a law never passed, a law which would have been unconstitutional had it been passed, and misinterprets a law passed by the General Assembly not in 1663 but in 1665.

Judge J. Moss Ives, in his recent book, "The Ark and the Dove," states that it was passed to appease the French who had come to the rescue of the state with a fleet against the English. De Grasse, however, arrived in 1778 and a field Mass was said for him and the men under him at Newport that year. Field Masses were also said for De Rochambeau in Providence Plantations. It may have been introduced and passed out of regard for their sensibilities although a more reasonable explanation is to be seen in an article by George Chalmers of London who, in 1780, wrote as follows regarding the infant state which first declared independence of the crown. Chalmers, in his "Political Annals" had said regarding the Charles II Charter granted in 1663:

> Amid the satisfaction occasioned by the great object of the wishes of everyone, an assembly composed agreeably to the Charter was convened in March, 1663. Among the great variety of ordinances which the circumstances required, and which were enacted, one "for declaring the privileges of his Majesty's subjects" is remarkable. It enacted: that no freemen shall be imprisoned or deprived of his freehold, or condemned by the judgments of his peers or by the law of the colony; that no tax shall be imposed or required of the colonists but by an act of the General Assembly; that all men of competent estates and civil conversation, Roman Catholics only excepted, shall be admitted freemen, or may choose or be chosen colonial officers.

Whereupon Mr. Chalmers moralizes:

> By it [the Great Charter] none were at any time thereafter to be molested for any differences in matters of religion. Nevertheless a persecution was immediately commenced against the Roman Catholics, who were deprived of the rights of citizens and the liberties of Englishmen.

Nothing could be more absurd nor contrary to the truth unless it be the writings and addresses of moderns who continue this absurdity. To begin with, there were no Catholics in Rhode Island in 1663 nor, except for the presence of French troops, were there any when Chalmers wrote. His article received wide circulation both in England and in America and was a sore spot with the Rhode Islanders who for more than a century had boasted of their tolerance. Presumably the General Assembly acted in 1783 to end such accusations. Whatever their motive they acted hastily and without examination of their own state and colonial records. This ignorance of their own history has cast a shadow over that history. A résumé of that history would not be amiss here.

The first permanent settlement was at Providence by Roger Williams in 1636. A member of no sect, he left Salem to avoid arrest and deportation for promulgation of his own peculiar ideas. He founded no church in Rhode Island. He was followed by others, few of whom agreed with him on belief. His settlement became a refuge for what Cotton Mather later was to call "all sorts of religious misfits." To an island south in Narragansett Bay went yet another group, dominant among whom were to be the Quakers. Two other independent settlements were to grow up around the bay. For decades these settlements had little in common. They had nothing in common with Massachusetts, Plymouth and Connecticut who sought to divide their lands and evict them from there. On one of two trips to England, Williams, who stood in higher regard in Parliament than he

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did in New England, secured a charter for all the colonies about Narragansett Bay, assuring their independence from their neighbors and incorporating many amazing clauses. This charter was brought back in 1663 and accepted at the March General Assembly. Among the clauses was this:

> ...that no person within sayd colonye, at any tyme hereafter, shall bee molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any difference in opinione in matters of religion which doe not actually disturb the civill peace of our sayd colonye; but that all and everye person and persons may, from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter mentioned, they behaving themselves peaceablie and quietlie, and not using this liberty to lycentiousnesse and profaness, nor to the civill injury or outward disturbance of others.

Williams's own philosophy of the right of man to civil liberty without regard to his religious convictions is written into this clause. It was for this, as well as for preaching the separation of Church and State, that he was forced to flee Massachusetts and it was for this that an edict of banishment (only recently revoked by Massachusetts) was invoked against him. No divine in Massachusetts ever hated the Quaker faith nor spoke against it with more force than Roger Williams. With tract and with speech he fought them the major part of his life. Yet they were already in Rhode Island and had he wished to evict or even silence them he had his chance while Charles was so receptive and Howard so obliging. Yet not a line in that charter is directed against the Quakers, the Trinitinarians nor any of the other sects Williams disliked. Nor is there a word in it against Catholics.

As if this charter were not enough to secure civil and religious rights to all his subjects in Rhode Island Charles in 1665 sent royal commissioners with five articles to set before the freemen for their vote. The second of these read:

> That all men of competente estates, and of civil conversation, who acknowledge and are obedient to the civil magistrate, though of different judgments, may be admitted to be freemen, and have liberty to choose, and to be chosen, officers both civil and military.

This proposition, together with the other four offered by the royal commissioners, was accepted and made into law at the May session of the 1665 General Assembly. There appears no religious qualification. Had Catholics been present in the colony nothing could have prevented them from taking part in the exercise of the ballot excepting the law governing freemen. That law, applied to all without prejudice, was a property qualification law demanding the possession of land. It was still on the books as late as 1840 and in part caused Dorr's Rebellion against the charter government. It was put in to prevent ex-slaves, Indians and incompetents from using the ballot at least until such time as they had shown substance by acquiring property. It had nothing to do with religion. In 1684, certain Jews of Newport having fled Portugal and Spain and feeling the need for protection in the New World, petitioned the General Assembly and were assured they might expect as good protection in Rhode Island as any other resident foreigner. Subsequently many of them purchased land and were admitted as freemen.

What Chalmers found and what has been held up to the world by him and subsequent writers, was a statute that appeared in the Digest of the Laws of 1719. This digest requires a word of explanation. The laws of the colony were scattered because the General Assembly had been in the habit of meeting at Newport, Warwick and Providence. They were in need of collection and revision. In 1717, a law was passed authorizing this work. It was printed in England and was a haphazard work throughout. It was never accepted by the General Assembly because of its many discrepancies and inaccuracies. It contained this rendition of the act regarding freemen, an act which, moreover, it falsely attributed to the General Assembly which met in 1663 to accept the charter.

> And that all rights and privileges granted to this colony by his Majesty's Charter be entirely kept and preserved to all his Majesty's subjects residing in or belonging to the same; and that all men professing Christianity and of competente estate and civil conversation, who acknowledge and are obedient to the civil magistrate, though of different judgments in religious affairs (Roman Catholics only excepted) shall be admitted freemen and shall have liberty to choose and be chosen officers in the military and the civil.

Comparison of this version with the original will reveal to anyone the error or fraud here committed. Williams never even demanded that a citizen of his colony be a Christian. Charles certainly said nothing of that nor did he except Roman Catholics. But when it is considered that the Catholicly inclined Charles and the Catholic James had gone by 1719 and that the Protestant Hanovers had taken their place, plausible reason for such interpellation presents itself, the more since the digest was printed in London.

This digest was never accepted by the General Assembly. It was sent back for revision and reprinted with this and many other errors left in. The digest was reprinted in 1730, 1744, 1752 and 1767. The qualification against Catholics remained with the word "only" left out. This word and the appearance of it in the Chalmers's version seems to indicate it was the one Chalmers read. Evidently Ives saw later editions or accepted someone else's version. In any event by 1730 interest in the digest had died. The errors, and there were others, remained. It was only when

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Chalmers took up the sword in 1780 that the General Assembly took sufficient notice of the digest to try to correct the error. Even then the Catholic question evidently was of insufficient interest to provoke examination of the original record which remained and remains in possession of the state. Had issue ever been made of the digest's misquotation it must have been deleted for in any event it was as unconstitutional as the Act of 1783 was unnecessary.

So much for this error. I have been at pains to make full quotations since it is always easy to charge that the text and not the context was taken. There was no feeling against Catholics in Rhode Island; there could be none, there were none there. Ives quotes Governor Peleg Sanford to show that there were no Catholics in 1680 and adds that none were wanted. Yet at the end of Sanford's letter from which his quotation is taken is this paragraph:

> ...his gracious Majesty [Charles II] after his happy restoration did of his bounttiful goodness graunt us a Charter full of liberty of conscience, provided that the pretence of liberty did not extend to licentiousnesse, in which said Charter there is liberty for any persons that will at their charges build churches and maintaine such as are called ministers without the leaste molestation as well as others.

Now as to Williams. Williams had no use for the Catholic Church. He says so again and again in his writings, using language which could not be reprinted at this day (but which was common enough among divines of his time) in which he consigned the Catholic Church and its works to the same place he consigned the Quaker faith. In this there is no mistake, Williams hated the Catholic Church.

His hatred of the Church, however, did not extend to Catholics, and there is a distinction. It is a part of our own faith that we may hate a thing, an evil, and not hate individuals who do evil. To Williams the Church was anathema. Toward Catholics he exhibited a tolerance that won him many a rebuke. It must be remembered that Williams's interest and activity in political and religious affairs in England continued after his coming to America. Some of his most forceful pamphlets were written on return voyages to England. He condemned more than once the persecutions of English Catholics and he actively fought their disenfranchisement in England. Consider these quotations from his works:

> ...to chain up all Papists in an impossibility of yielding civil obedience is unjust.

This was in defense of Catholics who were being persecuted by Cotton Mather in the bay.

> I see no reason why even Papists themselves may not be allowed to hold office.

This in his "Bloody Tyrant" with which he opposed the exclusion of Catholics from English public office in 1664.

> It hath fallen out sometimes that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked on one ship, upon which supposal I affirm that all Liberty of Conscience I have ever pleaded for turns on these hinges; that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks be forced to come to ship's prayers, or worship, nor be compelled from their own particular prayers of worship, if they practise any.

This last is true measure of Williams's tolerance. It is the tolerance of the Charter, it is the tolerance of Peleg Sanford, it is the tolerance of the Rhode Islanders who in 1778 witnessed field Masses for the French deliverers, it is the tolerance that prevented the state from enacting religious laws against Catholics when the other states were enacting them, it is the tolerance that was written into the Constitution of the United States, it is the tolerance that prevented Know-nothing riots in Rhode Island after the first great wave of Irish Catholics into the state, it is the tolerance that has permitted the Catholic Church to number more than half of the inhabitants of Rhode Island within her fold today.

For Catholic writers to deny Williams and Rhode Island her true measure of glory in the fight for tolerance in America, for Catholics to further disseminate the calumnious falsehood that there was "no true religious liberty in Rhode Island before the Revolution" is to be guilty of unfairness, stubbornness in the face of facts, misunderstanding and bigotry. We have a name among members not of our faith for bending the truths of history to suit our own ends. I have never believed we do it deliberately but acceptance of evident falsehoods lays up open to this charge.

I often think that this calumny is encouraged to strengthen the claims of Maryland to preeminence in the extension of religious freedom to Americans. There is no need of it. The facts show that the Maryland settlement was first. Let that be sufficient and in this year, the three hundredth of Rhode Island's founding, let Catholics extend a hand to a colony which, if not first, at least was the first Protestant colony to contribute to that soul liberty which Papist and Protestant, Jew and Turk, enjoy today.

Votive Candle

A long wick and a pointed flame
And wax from the honey-comb,
I would be a candle
And burn within your home.
I would light your page for you
And light you up to bed
And make a dazzle of the dark
And silver on your head.

MARIE GILCHRIST.

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HELPING THE PRESS

By FRANCES BOARDMAN

ARTICLES on the subject of Catholic publicity and a Catholic press have appeared frequently in THE COMMONWEAL, but so far as I have seen, none has yet dealt with the question from the standpoint of the regular daily newspaper.

Although a Protestant, it has been my accessory function on the staff of which I am music editor, to deal with local Catholic affairs, and my initiation into the details of it date back to the death of the late Archbishop John Ireland. Not very experienced, even as a reporter, and unversed in the fine points of ecclesiastical procedure and terminology, I was all but overwhelmed by the necessity for preparing not only the news stories required for every edition, but also the exhaustive and varied obituary material demanded by the importance of the occasion. On top of all this, I also had to manage the minutely detailed accounts which both preceded and followed the funeral ceremonies.

The result of my labors did not approach even a modest ideal; I should not, in fact, like to expose my vanity to the test of examination into the files. But if I deserved in any degree the commendation of that old retainer of the archepiscopal household, who assured me between sobs of sincere grief, that I had "given the old man a grand send-off," it was mainly because conscious ignorance impelled a merciless thoroughness of investigation.

During the week which intervened between death and burial, I went into anxious daily conference with the late churchman's secretary, now the Bishop of Duluth; with the pastor of the cathedral, the undertaker, the priest designated master of ceremonies, and with the vicar general. They must have grown very weary of instructing me, but by the time it was all over I had acquired a useful working knowledge of information sources, and also of names and titles figuring prominently in the American hierarchy.

Some months later, when, in spite of melancholy prognostications on the part of loyal old-timers regarding a successor, to the effect that "whoever he is, he'll be no good at all, anyhow," one was found in the distinguished person of Bishop Dowling of Des Moines, I was sent to that city to get an interview, and subsequently reported the elevation and installation ceremonies. Since then my office has considered me Contact No. 1 with local Catholicism.

There are many rewards in the practise of such a specialty, and, of course, the normal number of pitfalls, but it never is uninteresting. And from a long and necessarily varied experience I have derived some ideas which seem to me worth examining in any consideration of the relations between the Church and the secular press. The first develops a suggestion that reporters be given more systematic cooperative aid. Often this is forthcoming; often, for reasons implicit in the situation, rather than from any lack of courtesy, it is not. But if the importance of such assistance could be realized and materialized, there would be much less error in the reporting of Catholic happenings.

For reporters, contrary to a curiously distorted popular view of the matter, do try very hard indeed to achieve accuracy; it is to their own greatest interest that they should do so. But there are occasions when, under pressure of the speed imposed by imminent dead-lines, there is not time for ordinary processes of verification. Many a time I have tried, and have seen other reporters try, to get authoritative information on some seemingly small, but journalistically essential, point, such as the correct initials or exact title of some visiting dignitary, or the members of some official committee, or whatever it may be, and with maddening failure.

Frequently this is due to the fact that all of the people concerned are either attending a meeting, or a social function. Sometimes the writer, unable to get help, takes a chance which lands him on the wrong side of the answer. Occasionally, if there is time, he risks the irritation of a consultant (and even he may or may not know the facts) who is ruthlessly paged and withdrawn from a ceremonial platform or from a dinner-table.

Now it is no more agreeable for the reporter to have to resort to this course than for the object of his call to have to respond, but he knows that failure to exhaust every means of getting a story straight will net him a broadside of highly outspoken comment from his office superiors, and, generally, from that section of the public which is chiefly concerned, all of which unpleasant consequences could be easily obviated by the introduction of a simple routine. Why could it not be established in advance of any significant occasion that Father Blank, at a given address and telephone number, would be accessible for consultation upon all facts and details? Speaking from the press-table, I can vouch for the improvement which would result from such an arrangement.

As for a more general consideration of Cath-

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olic publicity, I have often marveled that so many possibilities for dignified, attractive exploitation seem to be consistently overlooked, and I am speaking now in terms of those aspects and functions belonging peculiarly to this Church, characteristics which set it distinctly apart from all the other institutions in the world. Large space is given to the routine treatment of those Catholic activities—civic, social, educational, etc.—that are common to innumerable contemporary organizations, but it is strangely seldom that emphasis is laid upon the distinctive side of the picture.

In this community, nearly all of the publicity matter emanating from Catholic churches and schools might, with the substitution of other names, pass, practically without change, for news from any secular or denominational institution. The whole idea seems to be to enter competition on a basis of duplication, with social bulletins and athletic schedules given long precedence over all other news.

There is no doubt that the monastic and conventual establishments within reach of any large daily paper would yield almost endless "feature" value in editorial estimation, and in a sense not at all incompatible with the proprieties of the case. And among the clergy there are many individuals whose contribution to specific fields of study or activity could be presented with important effect. Then there is the supremely interesting historical fact that the Catholic Church is the single visible, and demonstrably continuous, bond with the ancient world—that circumstance, alone, could furnish inspiration for such effective allusion and color as a competent reporter would revel in utilizing.

It is not for me, of course, to argue the desirability of a Catholic daily press from either side. But I do know that the Church and its interests might find far more effective representation in the already established secular journals than has even begun to be realized.

THE GREGORIAN ESTHETIC

By KENNETH RYAN

DISCUSSION of the qualities, exhilarating or exacerbating, of plainchant ordinarily finds its basis in the subjects of rhythm and modality. The usual procedure is to contrast the free rhythm of the chant with regular rhythm and to say of the Gregorian modes that they are as distinct from each other—all eight of them—as are the major and minor modes of our present-day theory. Now, although Boethius is the authority for the statement that Pythagoras cured a sick man by the use of the third mode and threw him into a relapse with the second, the modes are not really as violently variegated as all that. Modality needs reconsideration. The polyphonic masters elaborated a system of fourteen modes which by a simple process of retransposition and analysis of melodic material can be honestly reduced to only four. A convincing argument can be put forward to show that the composers of the golden age of Gregorian chant worked from a basic scale of four notes, which were related to each other as are the top (or bottom) four notes of our modern major scale. A melody fell into one or another of the modes according as it ended on one of these four notes—and only at the final note was a melody placed unequivocably into its mode. The number fourteen or even eight as definitive of the number of modes ought to be attributed to the late medieval love of distinction and sub-distinction and to the fifteenth-century love of luxuriance. Since even elementary harmony presents four different forms of the scale the Gregorian modes need not be regarded as excessively subtle.

Nor is the rhythm of the chant, as its theory has been developed by Dom Mocquereau, basically different from that employed in the higher forms of classical or present-day music. His profound study of rhythm has shown that its essential rules are applicable to plainsong and modern music alike, that the chant contrasts sharply only with the more debased and vulgar manifestations of the art of music. A sense of rhythm may be awakened in various ways, the simplest of which is the regular recurrence of stress as in march or dance music. Similarly, strict measure, even without the reinforcement of stress accents, may impart a definite feeling of rhythm to a melody. Then there are less mechanical ways of introducing rhythm, for instance, the judicious interspersion of the tonic and dominant notes of the mode or key. The length of individual notes has a clearly defined rôle in the production of rhythm for the longer notes of necessity become the more important and terminate or enucleate a group of notes. Rhythm can be produced from any one of these devices but the Gregorian composers confined themselves to the last two. Later musicians employ them all and therein lies the only valid rhythmical distinction between the two kinds of composers.

There is, however, one small technical difference between the Gregorian melodies and the products of more recent centuries which sharply

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marks off the old from the new theory, which is seemingly insignificant but which contains and symbolizes in itself a whole philosophy of difference. It lies in the employment of the leading note. The ancients abhorred it but nine-tenths of classical harmony is based on a progression which includes it. The Gregorian composers almost never (there are three or four exceptions in the whole Vatican Gradual) led their melody to a close by preceding the final note with the half step just under it. The construction of the modes made this possible only in the fifth and sixth modes and there such writing was sedulously avoided. The closing cadences of most modern works have this leading note somewhere in the harmony if not in the melody itself. The point I would like to make is that the first use of the leading note did not represent an advance in the technique of musical composition but rather a radical change in the attitude of the western mind toward music itself. Its introduction was contemporaneous with humanism and the impulse toward worldly pleasure and sensory satisfaction that came with the Renaissance. Music from that time began to be prized for, and judged by, its "sweetness."

There is undoubtedly a great satisfaction to the modern ear in the approach to the final tonic by way of the half step below it. This brings a sense of finality and completeness unattainable by any other device. The sensation is so pleasurable that even the modern minor mode is modified in the vast majority of instances to allow its use and to give the sensation of finality at the expense of what should be the more dominating musical coloring. Some of the most grotesque and jumbled ideas in music are to be found in those drab collections or organ voluntaries of the last century which present pieces as being written in the Dorian or some other mode but which chromatically alter the seventh note of their scale to get in their modern perfect cadence. Now the Gregorian composers were so little ignorant of this device that they regarded its use as a mistake. They looked on even the Lydian mode as lascivious because it employed a scale containing the same melodic material as does now our modern scale of C. Though they did not use the leading note in composing in that mode, they nevertheless felt that the mode implied it, therefore they condemned soft Lydian airs.

I suppose that the most general way of stating the difference between their attitude toward their art and the attitude of secular composers is to say that the Gregorian composers did not have sensual enjoyment as their aim, that their work originated from an intellectual conviction that the art of music should be decently employed in the praise of God; secular composers had as their aim the production of something which had first of all to be pleasant to the ear, and which used this pleasure as a means of calling forth an emotional reaction. The distinction is basically that between an intellectual and an emotional act. It followed naturally that composers would employ musical devices in accordance with their fundamental objectives, the chant composers avoiding the leading note, later musicians using it because as no other contrivance could, it lent sweetness and emotional tension to their music.

It is Wooldridge, I think, in the "Oxford History of Music," who makes the point that music in its comparative technical development lagged about two hundred years behind the other arts. With this admitted it appears that the introduction of the leading note was simply the manifestation in music of a change that had come over many other things in medieval times.

The most obvious of these changes was the pointing of the Roman arch to form the Gothic. This subject has been taken up in the pages of THE COMMONWEAL by Father Ducey who finds the Gothic less in keeping with the predominant ideas of the Church's official worship than is the Roman-Byzantine architecture. It is perhaps too much to say that the difference here is simply that which exists between builders guided by intellectual concepts and those governed by emotional impulses but certainly the balance inclines toward the former in the Roman building and toward the latter in the Gothic. The Gothic would seem to have as its chief objective the pointing out of heaven to man, this by a straining, surging, restless appeal to the visual sense which is far more in the nature of an emotional act than is the quiet purposeful calling of our attention to the heavenly things of earth by the earlier form.

The change that came over the representation of Christ on the Cross is another parallel to what occurred in music. When Our Lord first was depicted with His Cross He was shown in His risen dignity and glory. From the sixth to the eleventh centuries—incidentally the golden age of chant—the artist's endeavor was to show two phases of the life of Christ which were thought of as almost inseparable, His suffering and His risen glory. The cross and the print of the nails were shown but there was also the attitude of victorious kingship. All through these centuries there was a gradual movement toward more realism until in the thirteenth century the crucifix showed only the sufferings of Christ—until its appeal was primarily emotional and the great truth complimentary to His suffering, His Resurrection, was left out of consideration. Again an artistic medium, full of meaning, which required an intellectual act for its apprehension, was discarded in favor of an art appealing primarily to the emotions.

A comparison between the arts of mosaic and stained glass will betray the same difference of intention on the part of the artists. The earlier

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decorators insisted with what seems too much rigidity to most of us upon the majesty of Christ, but as a matter of fact they successfully endeavored to combine, as did the makers of the early crucifixes, the glory and suffering of Christ in a single work of art. Their Pantocrator has as much of the Divine dignity as human art may well convey, but at the same time He is presented as the Man of Sorrows more forcibly than any later art could so portray him. The art of stained glass is essentially one of miniature from which conceptions embodying anything like majestic sweep are precluded. The emphasis is necessarily on things like tenderness and sweetness which, however good and true they may be, do not offer a field for the adequate expression of the grander and more fundamental truths of faith.

As far as Church music is concerned then, it would appear that the introduction of the leading note imposed a limitation on music rather than added to its faculties of expression. It enabled musicians to follow in the path of the architects, artists and decorators, all of whom had to no little degree upset the wonderful balance that earlier men had established in Christian art. The world was drifting toward humanism, toward an overemphasis of things human, toward an exaggeration of the importance of emotion in life and art, forgetting all along the necessity for strict balance between emotion and intellect if complete truth was to be expressed. There is as much sweetness, tenderness and delicacy in certain of the Gregorian melodies as will be found in the whole literature of music, but they are never insisted upon to the exclusion of intellectual recollection. When the theory of the art came to the stage where a technical device productive of sensual and emotional reaction had too predominant a part in composition, church music took its place with the other arts on a very indirect pathway to truth.

The essence of the Gregorian esthetic is not to be expressed simply by referring to the circumstance that plainchant has free and not regular rhythm or that it comprises more modes than modern theory admits. It lies rather in the fact that its composers carefully refrained from the employment of a device that would make their melodies too sweet, too worldly, too apt to excite sensual emotion at the expense of reasoned prayer. The Gregorian art contains what later music has to offer and more, for as the Roman-Byzantine architecture contrived to present heaven and earth, as the early crucifixes presented suffering and glory, as the mosaics portrayed divine majesty and human sensibility, the chant for its complete appreciation demands the exercise of the intellectual as well as the emotions and it thus remains capable of expressing the highest knowledge of man.

A PLEA FOR CONCENTRATION

By WILLIAM F. M. LONGWELL

THE COMMONWEAL has attracted and published the articles of a group of sound economic thinkers. These men week after week bear down hard, first on this aspect of our existing embroglio, then on that turn of governmental activity. It all makes most interesting reading and it will probably continue. Yet very little of the matter is of a nature to indicate leadership. The theses are but scattering shots in the general direction of an ill-defined shadowy opposing force. They do not satisfy to the extent that the reader can and must say: "Here is the man who knows. I will follow him!" We are approaching a crisis in which such leadership must arise or the lack of it will constitute a fatal weakness in our offensive and defensive front.

I do not propose myself, unknown and inexprienced, as a leader, but I do take the liberty of calling on all these fine thinkers to reconsider the light in which they have been viewing the problems of the day. Now chess is a game continuously requiring such reflection. It resembles the counterplay of forces in economic life with intriguing accuracy. But I shall not tire you with a forced parallel, because the real lesson to be drawn from chess for use in this emergency is one of generalship. The game is in progress. Decision and action are demanded of the Catholic economist. And what does he do about it? In the general case he follows his bent or his whim and focuses all his attention on a small portion of the field of battle, totally oblivious to possible urgent necessity for reinforcement on another front. This is narrowness of vision.

In war or chess or any competition whatever the stake, the successful contender must constantly estimate and assess his opponent's strength, dispositions and intentions. Only thus can he have any assurance that he will not be fanning the air while a fatal thrust is being launched at his heart. Only after fully, conservatively and safely appraising the most violent line of action open to the enemy is one justified in deciding on the measures necessary to neutralize the attack. Collateral effort may become desirable after the main victory is secured, but to reverse the order and importance of the two generally proves fatal to the enterprise. Let us pause then in our spasmodic feints and threats until we determine the situation, and then seek the one factor in the discussion which is of ruling urgency and which will nullify all our striving if it be not curbed.

The central figure in any estimate of the economic situation must be unemployment. Standing at 11,500,000 men in April, 1935, it is mute evidence of the stalemate in which all attempts to "solve the depression" are locked. The fact of this unemployment must be faced calmly and without horror in spite of its grisly significance in terms of human degradation. Now it is customary among economists to assume that there is a universal desire to end unemployment. This may be true of an ephemeral sentimental desire but the practical hard facts of the business world show the contrary to be the case. Business, that is, employers, want labor costs to be kept as low as

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possible. But the unemployment is the "surplus" supply of labor which by the operation of the law of supply and demand will keep the price of labor as low as public opinion will permit it to fall. The other force tending to perpetuate unemployment is collective bargaining. The constant fight for higher pay and shorter hours is forcing the installation of more and more labor-saving machines, thus further reducing the demand for labor. The unions conducting the fight have no interest in anyone who is not already employed and able to pay dues. Any collective bargaining done by the unions is much more against the unemployed than against the employers.

Therefore unemployment considered merely as a phenomenon is not going to disappear of itself. The selfish forces to which it is a vital necessity or a necessary by-product are too powerful. But the correction of this particular evil would remove the majority of the rest of the disabilities under which we groan. Let us look then at the various schemes which have been excogitated in this connection and follow them back to the principles on which they are based. First came the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Credit was granted to permit hiring men to manufacture more goods. They weren't hired. Why not? There was no market for the goods. Then Monsignor Ryan advocated public works to cost $5,000,000,000, a staggering sum when first mentioned. The program after many false starts is now nearly under way.

The first result of the spending of the immense quantity of borrowed money for public works was that business began to improve, but it did not need more laborers. High minimum wages had brought about the installation of machines in undreamed-of numbers. Big business spokesmen began to opine that it was natural for 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 men to be unemployed due to technological improvement. Thus the public works program degenerated into an outrageously expensive dole system, with the money which was meant to circulate returning by ever more direct routes to the coffers of those to whom the same money with accrued interest was due and payable by the American taxpayer. Now it is possible to conceive of an extension of the public works plan to employ permanently 10,000,000 men. Let us assume then that the average wage is to be $1,000 per year. This would indicate an annual payroll of $10,000,000,000. Not a total impossibility in the light of a national income of nearly $50,000,000,000 in 1934. But the only way these men could be permanently employed would be in maintenance and repair of structures. Any other kind of work is only temporary. The structures must be new, for the existing plant is already being adequately maintained. But a $1,000 a year man may use $500 worth of supplies and materials in a year, thus raising our annual disbursements to $15,000,000,000. A conservative, for our purposes, estimate of annual maintenance is about 8 percent of the first cost of the structure. These structures requiring annual maintenance of $15,000,000,000 must cost about $187,500,000,000. After careful consideration, I feel constrained to pronounce the scheme impracticable.

My learned friend, Mr. R. Dana Skinner, in two COMMONWEAL articles last July showed conclusively the advantage of preferred stock ownership as against bonded indebtedness in so far as protection of property and employment is concerned. He did not in those articles offer any means of reemploying the 10,000,000 idle men. Mr. Michael O'Shaughnessy may not like to admit it, but his study of "The Constitution and Security" in the August 9 COMMONWEAL suffered from the same lack of extension. He wants "living family wages by the year for workers," but nothing for the unemployed. In fact, both these eminent writers neglect the actual pressing problem of the existing unemployment. They desire to prevent a recurrence, but as to curing it they are silent. It is a little like a conference over a dying man as to how he can be prevented from contracting the disease again.

Now it may be true that unemployment is not worthy of the study of serious economists. If that be so, as I emphatically deny, then we should come out in the open and say so and show why 20 percent of our potential workers are suddenly beneath consideration. But on the other hand if the prime evil of the day is this same unemployment, let us hammer away at it with all our acumen, consolidating gains where made, until we have a body of doctrine so strong, so well-grounded, so necessary, so self-sustaining that public opinion is aroused in its favor and definitive action may follow as surely as the harvest follows the rain and the sun.

As the seed of such a hoped-for fruition let me offer an article, again by Mr. R. Dana Skinner, in the May issue of the *Sign,* entitled: "Can Saving Become a Vice?" in which he points accurately to the reason for the present unemployment and hints at a means of correcting it. Still another very immature article by the present writer in the July 13 issue of *America,* entitled "The Hole in the Roof," goes slightly further in mapping out the practicable method of achieving the desired end without recourse to constitutional amendments or the famous interstate commerce clause on which most of the New Deal has depended so entirely.

Gentlemen, let us cooperate on basic necessities first, and with those secured, if the other needs still exist, we can proceed to attend to them under much surer auspices. And in the process we shall build leaders.

House Builder

From making stately ships to tread the seas,
Lovely as ladies are, proud-miened and fine,
His eye and hand had learned the mysteries
Of shaping clean white wood to breathless line,
Of hewing timbers and then placing them
Strong-joisted to outlast two hundred years,
And yet resplendent as a diadem
With beauty that can move the heart to tears.
And so, most chaste in form, with fanlight frail
As cockleshell and tall white portico,
He built his gracious house and it still stands
As fair as any craft that sets full sail
To idle down smooth waves when no gales blow,
Or any temple ever made by hands.

THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The Holy Father's mission intention for March is: "To protect the people in mission lands from the harmful effects of industrialism." * * * The Bishops' Committee on Motion Pictures declared, February 26, that it was opposed to screen censorship through legislative measures. "The Legion of Decency regards public opinion as a much safer guide than would be any regulations made by political appointees in a Federal Agency." * * * The Society of St. Gregory is holding public practise every Monday under Dom J. Bernard McElligott, O.S.B., in preparation for a high Mass for peace, Easter Monday, at Westminster Cathedral, London, when "the ordinary of the Mass with the responses shall be sung as with one voice by all the faithful present." * * * At the Texas Centennial Exposition, a Catholic Exhibit housed in a replica of the first Texas parish church (1681) will portray the historical, cultural, educational, charitable and religious work of the Church in Texas from the beginning. At least thirty-six missions throughout the state are to receive permanent plaques. * * * Reverend L. Picot, a French missionary in Rangoon, Burma, has built the first "Flying Flea" to appear in the East. This plane weighs 250 pounds, can attain a speed of 80 miles an hour and has a cruising range of 250 miles. * * * "Home-Schools" sponsored by the United Parents Front are now providing religious instruction for 25,000 Mexican children. * * * *Catholic Action* reports that in this country "1 percent of the people own 59 percent of the wealth, 19 percent own 36 percent of the wealth and 80 percent own 5 percent of the wealth." * * * The *Christian Century* ascribes the "revival of influence and power," which the Church is enjoying in South America, to "a reaction against nationalistic materialism"; "wisely organized activities within the Church"; "the tolerance and indifference of the liberal elements." * * * Mr. Albert Schweitzer, of the National Catholic Alumni Federation, has started at 58 East Washington Street, Chicago, a Catholic Book Service for local and nation-wide sale of books, pamphlets and periodicals.

The Nation.—The Interstate Commerce Commission ordered a radical reduction in passenger train fares. The schedule starting June 2 will be: for coaches, $.02 a mile; for Pullman, $.03. The present charge in coaches is $.036 in the East, with reductions in the West and South. The ICC for the first time lowers fares, not to check the profits railways are making from the public, but to try to produce some profits. * * * The new farm bill was signed on the first day of March. Congress is now worrying about revenues to run it. Last year, the calendar year 1935, the AAA paid out $580,821,024 to farmers. * * * The President signed the neutrality law which continues the rules operative since Italy and Ethiopia have been warring. At the same time he appealed to American business not to capitalize on foreign wars. Now that the sanction question is alive in Geneva again, the legislation will likely soon be tested to the full. * * * Federal relief authorities estimate that at present about 24,000,000 persons are dependent on relief, 14,200,000 through work relief and about 10,000,000 through local aid. There were about 3,000,000 fewer dependent on relief in January, 1934. * * * The Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce continued hearings on the Pettingill-Neely bill to outlaw "block booking" and "blind selling" of movies. Producers unanimously insisted these trade practises are good and necessary, while many theatre owners condemned them. * * * Air mail carriers, shocked two years ago by the annulment of their government contracts, were exonerated by the Department of Justice of all criminal and civil liability in connection with the mail and especially with getting mail contracts. * * * A bill similar to the Walsh bill that has been before the Senate was introduced into the House. The bill would include in all government contracts, standards of business similar to those sought under NRA. Firms or persons contracting with the government would have to abide by these standards.

The Wide World.—Martial law remained in effect as Japanese leaders conferred with the Mikado about the formation of a new government. The revolt had been suppressed by February 29, but no accurate account of the casualties was available. To the astonishment of all, Premier Okada reappeared uninjured, the rebels having slain his brother-in-law by mistake. The Emperor conferred with Prince Saionji, last of the Genro, and it was believed that while the new government would probably be headed by a "strong man"—possibly General Minami—the liberals would be accorded a considerable measure of influence. Though Japanese currency and securities fell on world exchanges, the uprising occasioned no serious financial trouble in the country itself. * * * Dispatches indicated that Italian armies had gained further successes on the northern front. The Ethiopian army commanded by Ras Kassa was said to have been destroyed, and observers felt that nothing but natural obstacles now barred the way to Addis Ababa. But at the same time news from Geneva indicated that, under pressure from Mr. Eden, the League of Nations committee would meet to suggest terms of peace. Should these not prove acceptable to Il Duce, the chances were that oil sanctions and possibly also steps to close the Suez Canal would figure in the news dispatches of the near future. * * * At the Naval Conference it was believed that a three-party agreement would be signed by the United States, Great Britain and France. To this Italy would probably assent after the close of the African war, since her present abstention is simply a protest against the British sanctions policy. London sources indicated that London and Berlin would arrange a separate treaty, to conform with the projected three-party agreement. * * * War sentiment was stronger throughout Europe. Many observers saw in the determination of

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Great Britain to embark on a vast rearmament program nothing but a realistic decision that a general conflict would break out by 1938 at least. Tension was likewise increased by the signing of the Franco-Russian pact, which more than any other single step restored the alignment of 1914 and blocked Nazi dreams of eastern conquest. Hitler issued a dramatic warning to the French, urging a peace pact while there was still time and hinting that Germany was ready to sign an agreement on aerial armament. * * * Television, often rated the world's coming big industry, became a practical matter with the opening of the first public service in the world. In honor of the Leipzig Fair, communication between that city and Berlin was established. Customers paid the equivalent of $1.40 for three minutes' time. * * * King Edward VIII addressed the British Empire on March 1, the broadcast reaching an estimated 20,000,000 listeners. The principal matter stressed was that the new King and the former Prince of Wales were the "same man."

* * * *

Taxes.—The administration, during this session of Congress, has insisted with increasing firmness that the regular budget be balanced. It has also been indicated that strenuous efforts will be made to keep the emergency budget down to about $2,000,000,000 during the next fiscal year. During the first eight months of the present fiscal year—ending February 29—the recovery and relief outlay has been $2,216,350,499.87. After giving fair warning that the Treasury needed new money to finance the pre-payment of the bonus and to substitute for the AAA taxes, President Roosevelt submitted to Congress one of the most extensive tax suggestions ever offered during an election year. The message not only gave the additional sums needed, but clearly indicated where the President thought they could come from. The government needs $620,000,000 regular revenue in addition to that coming in now, and also $517,000,000 in non-recurring revenue to make up for what has been spent, but, because of the Court's decision, not collected. A "windfall tax" was suggested to get the money which the law makes the government return to companies that paid the processing taxes. Also, a temporary excise tax somewhat similar to the AAA taxes was proposed to run for a few years. The important recommendation was to transform corporate taxation in a way to produce $620,000,000 a year extra. The excess profits taxes which corporations now pay would be repealed; likewise the corporate income tax and the capital stock tax. These taxes amount to $994,000,000 a year. The profits of corporations would be taxed in this way: that distributed in dividends would be taxed in the normal levies extracted from individuals. That is, the exemption now accorded corporate dividends from normal taxes on individual incomes would be repealed. Undistributed corporation profits put into surpluses would be taxed at a rate which would yield about what the Treasury would get if they had been distributed to individuals to be taxed in personal income taxes. These new taxes would equal about $1,614,000,000, the desired $620,000,000 more than those repealed.

Nazism and Culture.—On February 29, the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Society went gunning for trouble by announcing that Wilhelm Furtwaengler, greatest of living German conductors, would lead its orchestra during the first half of next season. Time was when this announcement would have been received with pleasure. But following the triumph of Hitler, Herr Furtwaengler permitted his name to be used in connection with government cultural agencies; and, despite a 1934 rift caused by his defense of Hindemith, he returned recently to his post as director of the Berlin State Opera. Accordingly the news of the appointment was greeted with cat-calls aplenty, and there were statements by individuals that unless the Furtwaengler invitation were countermanded their support of the orchestra would cease. Meanwhile Heidelberg University began to send out invitations to the observances in honor of its 550th anniversary. A number of English universities declined. But in New York Columbia announced that it had replied in the affirmative. During the excitement which followed, the student council voted four to three for a resolution petitioning the university to change its mind. There followed an announcement that the acceptance had not been sent by President Butler but had been authorized by the university board as a routine matter. Vocal student opinion at Cornell likewise demanded a reply in the negative. But the news was that Cornell, Michigan, Vassar and Western Reserve had all accepted. Of the fact that the Heidelberg festivities were designed for their propagandistic effect there can be no doubt.

Plays for the Players' Sake.—A Lenten performance of "Everyman" is soon to be one of the achievements which make history for the Federal Theatre project in New York. Other cities are not yet quite so far along, but it is said that more than two hundred plays are being cast and rehearsed in scores of cities from coast to coast. Hallie Flanagan, once the guiding spirit of the Vassar Experimental Theatre and now National Director of the WPA dramatic adventure, expects that the hard work of organization will begin to bear fruit in places as diverse as York, Pennsylvania, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, before the tulips bow their way out of the garden. In New York, theatre-goers are to have their pick of eighteen shows in regular performance. The Negro actors at the Lafayette have put on "Walk Together Chillun," and are to try a special Negro version of "Macbeth." A Jewish company has staged an adaptation in English of "The Idle Inn," by Peretz Hirschbein. Kleist's "Der zerbrochene Krug"—romantic play by an ill-starred genius—is to be produced with pantomime making it intelligible to listeners knowing no German. Among the other attractions are showings of classics like "The Rivals" and "She Stoops to Conquer," and at least seven marionette plays. Several new plays are in rehearsal. One, "The Woman of Destiny," will describe what might happen if the first woman president of the United States took office just as a war scare was flourishing. More ambitious possibly is the effort to stage W. H. Auden's "Dance of Death," a poetic fantasy set to music.

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Non-Catholic Religious Activities. — In twenty-five centers a National Preaching Mission will be conducted this fall under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches. The four-day missions at each center will include general meetings, ministers' conferences, afternoon seminars and street preaching. In preparation, Dr. E. Stanley Jones of India, one of the leaders, has gone to the lofty Himalayas for a three months' retreat. * * * Resolutions favoring the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill and a national child labor amendment were adopted at the meeting of the Executive Board of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods. The president, Mrs. Henry Nathan, declared, "Today on every side both Jew and non-Jew are reawakened to the dire necessity of creating through religion a world in which social justice plays a vital part." * * * At the ninety-ninth annual meeting of the Episcopal diocese of Chicago, Right Reverend Frederick Barlett, director of domestic missions for the Protestant Episcopal Church, said that 30,000,000 Americans live in rural areas without church facilities and 11,000,000 children receive no religious training whatever. * * * Dr. W. Y. Chen of Fukien Christian University, Miss Tseng Pao Swen of Changsa and Dr. T. C. Tu of the University of Shanghai have concluded an evangelical speaking tour to thirteen Chinese cities; they addressed 159,000 people. * * * More than 1,000 clergymen of various denominations attended the recent Ohio Pastors' Convention which vigorously opposed the impending introduction of a R.O.T.C. unit at Ohio State and voted its approval of the cooperative movement.

Boulder Dam.—The highest dam in the world, forming the largest man-made lake ever known, was completed on the first of the month at Boulder City, Nevada, two years ahead of schedule, and turned over to the United States government. Work on the project really started in 1921, when Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover called the Colorado River Commission into existence. Construction was begun in March, 1931. Four purposes will be served: regulating of floods on the Colorado River, developing power, supplying irrigation and providing domestic water supply to southern California and adjoining areas in Arizona and Nevada. A flood has already been prevented by the impounding of spring freshets in the lake above the dam last year. By releasing this water through the summer and fall, a drought similar to the one which the year before caused crop losses estimated at $10,000,000 was prevented in the irrigated valleys of the lower Colorado River. Eventually the reclamation of sufficient acreage to care for 5,000,000 persons will be effected 2,000,000 horsepower in electrical energy will be developed and an aqueduct more than 200 miles long will provide for the water needs of increasing populations in Los Angeles and neighboring cities. The city of Los Angeles and the Southern California Edison Company will operate the power plant under the direction of an engineer appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, and the latter will operate and maintain the dam. Through the sale of power, it is planned that all money spent on the dam will be repaid to the government in fifty years.

Peace for Conscience's Sake.—Having earned renown through the publication of numerous excellent pamphlets and studies, the Catholic Association for International Peace now ventures to present one of the most ambitious of recent treatises on the whole subject of the morality of peace. "The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations" was brought to completion by Mr. John Eppstein with the help of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "To form a true or at least an adequate conception of the Catholic tradition upon so vast and varied a subject, it is necessary," says the author, "to trace the evolution of ideas through many centuries and to study the application in many lands and by many minds of the principles laid down from time to time by the Popes. This book is a modest endeavor to meet this need." Nor is this sham modesty. Mr. Eppstein has written comparatively little of his own, but has gone to almost infinite trouble in gathering, translating and correlating the documentary evidence. So important a treatise (to be reviewed later in THE COMMONWEAL) may well seem to have been aptly written for these precarious times.

Works of Mercy.—To arouse more fortunate readers and to give needed information to the poor, *Sept* has been conducting a "Crusade of Charity" for Paris and its suburbs, and also for various parts of France, where poverty has been increasing steadily in recent months. Every parish in the French capital has a conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Ladies of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul to whom the poor can turn in their extremity. In 1934, the Ladies of Charity expended 1,017,710 francs in the city of Paris alone. Seventeen centers where clothes and bedding may be obtained from the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul are also listed. Fifty coordinated Centers of Social Action with regular office hours are maintained in Paris to direct the needy to sources of food and clothing and principally to provide free legal and business advice. They encourage the unemployed, remove their feeling of isolation and rehabilitate them for places in the community's social and economic life. The Confédération Générale des Familles under the able and beloved Abbé Viollet gives aid without proselytizing to 50,000 families irrespective of creed. While it renders special assistance to large families, the Confédération is placing its chief hopes on the young unmarried workers who will one day establish homes of their own. Abbé Viollet says this "is the only way to give our movement the power that will make the authorities respect it." Shelter, insurance, study clubs, youth movements, consumers' cooperatives, health, recreation and the press are among the organized activities of this remarkable society. The spirit that animates the crusade is well expressed by one reader: "Social work . . . does not consist solely in extending an offering on the tips of one's fingers, but in leaving the hand which offers in the hand which receives. . . ."

Pan American Developments.—In a new treaty with Panama, concluded March 2, the United States surrendered its right to intervene to preserve the independence

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of Panama or to maintain order in the cities of Colon and Panama or their environs. Rent for the Panama Canal will be paid in 100-cent rather than 59-cent dollars with a small sum thrown in for interest charges resulting from Panama's past refusal to accept payment in devalued dollars. Although the protection of the canal is deemed of interest to both nations, the United States reserves the right to take whatever measures it considers necessary for its protection. In case of war Panama would not be required to yield her own territorial sovereignty to the United States. Observers linked the new treaty with the abrogation of the Platt Amendment for Cuba as integral steps of the "good neighbor" policy. Sentiment for the Pan America parley continued to gain momentum and Mexico sent in an acceptance of Mr. Roosevelt's invitation. Paraguay seemed to be the chief obstacle to setting the date and, because of the rebels' recalcitrance toward the Chaco peace terms agreed upon by its ousted predecessors, it looked for a time as if a deadlock would ensue. As we go to press there are intimations that Colonel Franco will stand by the agreements and support a Pan American peace conference.

* * * *

Strike Drama.—Two extremely dramatic strikes were in progress. The service trade walkout in New York City tied up 1,300 buildings in residential and business zones, many of them very high skyscrapers. A strikers' parade down elegant Park Avenue resulted in broken windows and some bruises. Demands were for increases in minimum wages, which range down to $70 a month in some classes of buildings, and for shorter hours, the week now being fifty-four hours in certain instances. Officials were attempting compromises and some buildings were signing up with the union by the third day of the effective strike. * * * In Akron the year's most important strike proceeded. The new United Rubber Workers of America, an industrial union, struck in the Goodyear plant. Techniques developed by progressives and radicals in the St. Paul truck drivers' strike, the Toledo Chevrolet strike, the San Francisco general strike were used by the leaders. The A. F. of L. Executive Committee, upholders of craft unionism, loaned the strikers money; the Committee for Industrial Organization of the disaffected vertical unionists in the A. F. of L. gave money and sent union experts to help out the young industrial union. It is generally conceded that a triumph for the Rubber Workers would be a victory for industrial unionism—aside from any more immediate effects in Akron. A picket line eleven miles long surrounds the huge struck plant which ordinarily employs 14,000 workers. There is a picket shelter at each of the 168 plant gates furnished by the Post Office with regular mail delivery. Twenty-two cruiser cars patrol from the strike headquarters along the line, bringing 1,000 sandwiches every two hours all day and night and plenty of hot coffee. There are theoretically ten pickets permitted at every gate. Pickets have taken over traffic control in the neighborhood of East Akron and they have closed nearby liquor stores. A demonstration by sheriff, police and deputies designed to open up the plant was unsuccessful when strikers stood firm. The Central Labor Union of the city has warned that any attempt to break the picket line by violence will be met by a general strike. Wages are not a principal point at issue in the strike, but chiefly hours, seniority, working conditions, and recognition of the union.

Farm Control.—A new Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act was passed by Congress and signed by the President. It is designed to take the place of the AAA. The new act is an extension of the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 which provided means for fighting soil erosion and the resultant floods, droughts and dust storms. The Secretary of Agriculture is directed to restore the pre-war relation between farm and city incomes for those farmers complying with the purposes of the act. No more than $500,000,000 can be spent by him in a single year in the attainment of these purposes, and they are both conditioned on the maintenance of a volume of food supplies for the nation not less than the 1920-1929 average. State conservation committees working through county and local committees, about as they did under AAA, will carry out the detailed applications of the general aims. Until 1938, the federal government will make the payments direct to the complying farmers; and thereafter it will make them in lump sums through states which have set up soil-conservation systems. Officials in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which will be the Secretary of Agriculture's agency for carrying out the plan, have estimated that about 30,000,000 acres of land normally planted with cash crops, such as grains, tobacco and cotton, will be shifted to raising grass and legumes which bind and enrich the soil. No tax measure for raising the necessary funds is made a part of the new act.

Federal Borrowing.—The largest borrowing by the federal government from the public since the Victory Note issue of May, 1919, was oversubscribed on the day of offering, March 2, and the gross national debt raised from around $30,500,000,000 to a record of $31,300,000,000. The offering included $650,000,000 of twelve- to fifteen-year 2¾ percent Treasury bonds, $600,000,000 of five-year 1½ percent Treasury notes and an additional amount of these two issues to cover about $559,000,000 of Treasury notes maturing April 15. The cash offering, therefore, amounted to $1,250,000,000, and it was this which was reported to have been heavily oversubscribed, with the demand for the bonds greater than the demand for the notes. Investors have been preferring the short-term securities in the immediate past and there was an indication in their turning to the longer-term issues that the financial community trusted the administration's intention to avoid inflation, as bonds with a fixed rate of interest are a poor form of holding in case of inflation. Government officials have sought to emphasize the note of confidence and to discount the theory that investors were turning to tax exempt securities in anticipation of the new tax imposts. In the past three years of the Roosevelt administration the national debt has been increased about $10,000,000,000.

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The Play and Screen

Love on the Dole

THE CHIEF weakness of the propaganda play from the point of view of the propagandist is that it never converts anyone who is not already converted, and by its bias repels many who might be well on their road to conversion. The human mind while taking to suggestion dislikes propulsion; it desires to know the facts, or at least what its initial prejudices think are the facts, but its egoism wants to feel that it is making up its own mind as to solutions and means of action. This is why as a stimulus to social justice such a play as "Love on the Dole" is so much more effective than a play like "The Black Pit" or "Waiting for Lefty." In the one the dramatist takes us kindly by the hand and leads us through the scenes, allowing them to speak for themselves; in the others we are never given time to make up our own mind, so deafening and emotionally unbridled are the harangues from the soap-box. Such a play as Mr. Odets's might well drive many into the ranks of the reactionaries in sheer disgust at its brutality and unfairness, but there can be few who do not leave a performance of the Ronald Gow-Walter Greenwood drama with a bitter disgust of things as they are and at least a desire to make them better. Mr. Odets and his fellow Left-wing playwrights will undoubtedly retort that we leave as empty of a program as we entered, and that mere good-will never yet gave birth to a revolution—to which the proper answer is that a revolution may well give birth to many things, but that most of them are crawling, slimy things. The novels of Charles Dickens produced no revolution in the sense that Mr. Odets conceives a revolution, but they were largely responsible for the reform of English schools and English prisons. They brought about that reform simply by the presentation of facts, and to their trust in the British public's spirit of good-will. In fact good-will is the soul of Dickens. Good-will is certainly not the soul of the Left-wing playwrights, though hatred comes near being, and it is because hatred is sterile and destructive that those who long for reform long also for an American Dickens.

All this is perhaps rather far afield in a discussion of "Love on the Dole" taken strictly as a thing in itself, for the play is not American but English, and deals with the horrible conditions in the industrial cities of Lancashire. Yet the story comes startlingly home to us in America. The tale is a simple one, telling of the poverty of the Hardcastle family and of the brave attempt of the parents to keep up the respectability of the children. Sally, the pretty daughter, is engaged to Larry Meath, who is killed in a labor demonstration, and Sally, deprived of the one thing she cares for in life and faced with poverty, takes at last the easiest way by becoming "the housekeeper" for a rich bookie. This is an old story, and one beloved of the writers of melodrama in the seventies and eighties, though in 1936 there is no happy ending.

But it isn't the story which makes "Love on the Dole" one of the outstanding plays of the season; it is the characterizations of these Lancashire working folk—the courageous, realistic Sally, the dumb courage of her father, the humor of her brother, and perhaps most effective of all, the three harridans, Mrs. Jike, Mrs. Dorbell and Mrs. Bull, who weave through the action, a combination of Greek chorus, horror and comic relief. As symbols of the degradation of an industrial civilization these three crones surpass anything dreamed of by the self-conscious dramatists of the Revolution. The acting is admirable and as Sally Miss Wendy Hiller reveals in particular an arresting talent. This young English girl has beauty, charm, pathos and tragedy. She ought to go far. Special praise, too, should be given to Alexander Grandison as Sally's brother, and to Reginald Bach as her father. The three crones are well played by Carrie Weller, Marie de Becker and Helen Strickland, though unlike the Hardcastle family they do not use the Lancashire dialect. Yet the play is of such universal appeal that its success does not depend on dialect. Despite its old story, its people are fresh and entertaining, even when they are horrifying. It is a play to be seen and pondered on. (At the Shubert Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Wife versus Secretary

THE BUSINESSMAN'S wife in this instance creates a domestic triangle purely out of imaginative fabric. The tale is in the vein of gay comedy romance. Entertainment values abound in performers of popular prestige: Myrna Loy, as the wife who stirs to action against the pretty Jean Harlow, serving as the ultra-capable secretary to husband Clark Gable. Expertly prepared, directed and acted, the production makes vivid use of imagination-stimulating illusion to complete the full atmosphere that the title indicates. Situations are cleverly contrived, intimate at times, yet in good taste, and move to the pace of bright dialog. (Generally released, March 1.)

Little Lord Fauntleroy

LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY is no longer the oversentimental lace and old lavender Fauntelroy of Mary Pickford's portrayal of the early 1920's. Instead, he stands, happily, in the enactment of Master Freddie (David Copperfield) Bartholomew, a thoroughly human youngster, a regular little fellow whose movements require no strain of the imagination to understand why he worms his way into the crabby old heart of the Earl of Dorincourt. David Selznick, himself a symbol of worthwhile selection and creation, shows due deference to the story's vast reservoir of sentimentalities, bringing forth a charming nostalgia that captures, with real persons, the complete spirit of pathos. It tells of a Brooklyn youngster, whose friends are the neighborhood bootblack and baker, who is transplanted with dramatic suddenness from those human surroundings to a tradition-encrusted manor house of age-old English aristocracy, there becoming heir presumptive to the title of Dorincourt. Tearful is Fauntleroy's separation from his widowed mother and their eventual reunion, as the old Earl, now reformed in kindness, smiles approvingly. (Generally released, March 9.)

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Communications

SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING MEXICO

Austin, Tex.

TO the Editor: I gladly accept your invitation appearing in THE COMMONWEAL, February 7, 1936, in which you ask about the conditions in Mexico: "Is there someone who can suggest a remedy, a way out, a simple and effective program of action which has a chance?"

The first thing Mexicans would like to ask of the people of the United States is to accept and realize the fact that there is a cruel tyranny in Mexico, revolting to all decent people, not only in regard to religious freedom but also private property and all civil and political rights.

To see that this tyranny exists it is sufficient to read the Constitution and to understand the way of enforcing laws in Mexico. It is enough to know that almost half of the republic is without a priest; that, according to the President's Plan of National Reconstruction, January 1, 1936 (Excelsior Jueves 2 de Enero de 1936), "during the year 1935, 2,335,017 hectares [more than 5,500,000 acres] of land" have been confiscated from their owners without indemnity; that judges have been ordered not to consider any civil or legal appeal of Catholics. For example, if a priest duly authorized and registered by the government has been stopped from ministering by some local official, in some states he can have no recourse to the courts or expect his rights under the law to be vindicated. Or if a parent does not send his children to the socialistic and sexual educational school, he has no legal personality in consequence, he can bring no case of any kind into the court, he can make no legal document, he can hold no public office: verily he becomes a pariah in the land of his birth.

The President, at any time, can stop the legal processes even in criminal affairs, and some judges have been deposed when their decision was in favor of Catholics.

To demonstrate the degree of tyranny exercised it is enough to state here that any house or property may be confiscated if reported as being or having been the residence or the office of a bishop or priest or used for religious purposes, and this without any process of law. It makes no difference whether the report is proved or not; the property is confiscated by the mere accusation, no recourse to any court can be made.

A Catholic, i. e., a non-member of the present ruling party, P. N. R., cannot vote and has no voice or representation in the government. The present government of Mexico is so tyrannical and absolute that no election in Mexico can posibly be fair; e. g., in Monterrey in 1935 a popular candidate elected by the people was refused office by the P. N. R.

Much has been done here in the United States against the tyranny of the present government of Mexico. The hierarchy in 1934 exhorted all the Catholics to apply to the government of the United States to help the persecuted people in Mexico. Many representatives introduced bills in the United States Congress for that purpose. The Knights of Columbus sponsored a praiseworthy campaign. Archbishop Curley established an office where anyone could obtain information, and published many leaflets with astounding and trustworthy data. Father Coughlin and Monsignor Sheen gave wonderful radio discourses. Several books have been written exposing the tyranny of the present situation in Mexico: "Blood-Drenched Altars" by Bishop Kelley; "Chaos in Mexico" by the Congregationalist Minister Reverend Charles S. Macfarland; "No God Next Door" by Father Kenney. Many very good pamphlets and articles by different persons and agencies are now published.

While it is the pitiful truth that the press in general is almost silent about the injustice and tyranny of the present government of Mexico (Mr. Hearst has great holdings in Mexico; to oppose the present régime would not be to his interest), almost all Catholic papers give true information about the conditions in Mexico, and the N. C. W. C. through its News Agency has provided trustworthy information to all the Catholic papers, even those outside of this country.

Mexico is very grateful for the good-will shown and the efforts made by the people of the United States to help her in this time of trial.

Some in Mexico think that the only remedy is armed defense, and without doubt they would be right if they could organize a real revolution; but that seems impossible while the Mexican government is supported by the American government, because no revolution in Mexico has ever succeeded without the support of the United States and all governments in Mexico, though popular and strong, fell as soon as they were not supported by the United States.

Others think that they could remedy the tyranny by peaceful means with an organized campaign of instruction for the people, through a real program of Catholic Action in spite of all the obstacles purposely created by the laws. Such a peaceful campaign has been in operation but it needs time and especially financial support to produce the desired effects. The Pope's program of Catholic Action is being adopted as far as possible by the Mexican Catholics woth great enthusiasm. Every diocese has the four groups, men, women, young men and young ladies, and even the children (*vanguardias, aspirantes*), organized. Mexico City alone has 50,000 working in Catholic Action.

Now to the question as to what the American people can do for the suffering people in Mexico. I think that they can do a great deal: (1) Pray to God for Mexico. (2) Express their disapproval of the Mexican government's injustice by parades, articles, pamphlets and all means of disseminating the truth about the tyranny of the present government. (3) Ask their own government to show its disapproval, and at the same time to refuse any encouragement to the present, unjust and unrepresentative Mexican government. (4) Help the persecuted ones in their many urgent needs, because many of them are not only persecuted but have been despoiled of the most necessary means: they cannot support their private schools and seminaries; they cannot publish the necessary printed instructions; they are even without means of livelihood.

A CATHOLIC.

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CATHOLICS AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: As one who has been a reader of THE COMMONWEAL for several years and who has not found much to quarrel with in any of its articles until the present time, I feel like calling your attention to an article in this week's issue under date of February 14, appearing on page 438, the title of which is "Catholics and the Social Order." If this article quotes Monsignor John A. Ryan when he was out here a week or two ago addressing the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems in Chicago, I am not only much surprised but somewhat alarmed at the doctrine Monsignor Ryan announced.

I am wondering why a churchman of his standing, and an educator as well, could be guilty of a covert attack upon the Supreme Court and base that criticism upon the statement that if the NRA had not been abolished it could have been developed into the system recommended by the Pope within ten years. And then follows a statement that a constitutional amendment is a prerequisite to the establishment of that system and he says, "Congress should have the constitutional power to regulate industry, commerce, agriculture, labor and finance." This, of course, is pure Socialism, if not worse.

I wonder how long a time the reverend gentleman thinks would elapse, if that constitutional amendment should be adopted and a Congress such as we now have under the control of the President should be given the unlimited power which he advocates, before there would also be a department added providing for a Secretary of Education and Religion.

In addition to the foregoing, consider the clarion trumpet call that comes out of Detroit every Sunday afternoon. Also remember that a Reverend Father Cox was leading a tatterdemalion army to Washington to secure something or other from the government. Now a gentleman of the standing of Monsignor Ryan is advocating a socialistic program. A layman might be pardoned if he wondered whether these gentlemen really learned anything from Spain, Mexico and Germany.

I wonder if the reverend gentleman has given consideration to how much the rank and file of the American public, outside of those actively within the Church, care whether the program in this country as finally adopted is in keeping with what the Holy Father has requested or recommended in some of his pronouncements. It seems to me if the gentlemen within the Church, and supposed to speak for the Church, continue to issue opinions such as THE COMMONWEAL quotes Monsignor Ryan as advocating, the Church in this country will soon be wondering what happened to it.

I may not be exact about these matters, but it seems to me the position of the Church in the United States is better than in any other country in the world, and it can only be disturbed by fool propositions such as I have indicated in the foregoing. For a mild criticism of yourself and your editorial counsel, it seems to me that doctrines of this kind should not be given publicity.

If we did not have the Supreme Court to protect us in this country against the very situations which Monsignor Ryan advocates, it would not be long before we would be in the same position as Germany, Italy and the other countries controlled by dictators, and the Church perhaps as in Spain, Mexico and Germany.

PATRICK J. LUCEY.

STATE POWER AND FREEDOM

Highland, Wis.

TO the Editor: I wish to reply to the misrepresentations concerning my article in your issue of November 29, 1935, made by the bureaucrat, Victor S. Yarros, in his letter published in your issue of January 24.

If by assuming that the Constitution gives to the Supreme Court the power to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional, I beg the question, there is not much of a question to beg. Merely because some sensation-seeker in Congress or elsewhere denies that Jesus Christ ever lived, or that the authors of the Constitution never intended to give that power, the statement does not raise a controversial question. Because Mr. Yarros questions the fact that the scandals of the Ohio gang and the Fall-Doheny financial transactions were scandals of our national bureaucracy does not make the fact a controversial matter. Any intelligent man, not blinded by the bias of ends desired, can find in numerous places in the Constitution itself that the authors intended to confer the power upon the Supreme Court. Why should provisions be made for a two-thirds vote of Congress and ratification by the states for amendments to the Constitution if Congress could amend it by a mere majority? Why provide that Congress shall not make a law prohibiting freedom of religion or freedom of speech if the mere majority that would pass the law could nullify the provision? If Congress can take away the constitutional rights of individuals and of local self-government by a mere majority, the authors of the Constitution perpetrated one of the most gigantic frauds in the history of the world on the legislatures that ratified the Constitution in reliance upon representations that there would be a means of preserving those rights.

In questioning my statement that among all other nations, England, Sweden and others have gone from one extreme to another, does Mr. Yarros wish to suggest that the governments of Henry VIII, Elizabeth and Cromwell are not the opposite extreme from today's government of England? Yet although the government of England today is radically different from its government just before the electoral changes of last century, it is the least changeable of all the countries named by Mr. Yarros. It has a house of legislative experts (Lords), who do not get and retain their office merely on account of their ability to make sensational statements or grab political pork for self-seeking organized interests, and it is able to keep back from the parlor of law the pretty little legislative pussies until their obnoxious stink-bags are amputated.

I have not the time to engage in a serial argument with Mr. Yarros in this column, as he suggests. If he wants more information on this subject, he should read my article in THE COMMONWEAL of July 13 and 20, 1934.

JOHN MARION EGAN.

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Books

Overstuffed Furniture

If I Have Four Apples, by Josephine Lawrence. New York: Frederick Stokes Company. $2.50.

THIS is a novel which pretends to no virtue but that of its thesis: wage-earning families should not purchase luxuries in excess of their incomes. The validity of the thesis Miss Lawrence attempts to prove by the negative example of the Hoes. Mr. Hoe once earned $50 a week as a shipping clerk; since the depression he has suffered three pay cuts. His wife works in a department store for $18 a week, his eldest daughter in a tea room for a nearly equal amount, while his younger daughter and his son attend high school. The Hoes have a car, a radio, an electric icebox, and a living-room suite of overstuffed furniture; they eat only the best food, but Mrs. Hoe's teeth are badly in need of repair.

The elder Hoes are not especially ambitious: Mr. Hoe wants most to make the final payment on his jerry-built ugly little house; his wife's ambition is more properly a dream—she wishes to see her children satisfied. Darthula, the eldest daughter, wants to marry a man with a good car and sufficient salary to provide her with "antique white" modern furniture. The desire of the younger daughter is to be a famous dancer; the boy hopes for fame as a lawyer. Blindly sure that all the shoddy knicknacks, gadgets and "conveniences" of modern industrialism are the essence and sign of the good life, the Hoes proceed into the wastes of debt in search of their promised land. Of course they never reach it, even lose their home, but they do see that their goal is impossible of achievement, even though they don't see that it is not worth achieving.

A certain compactness and economy is evident in this book, and it is the result of its thesis serving as a principle of selection in place of any (more difficult) artistic principle; that is, all thought, action and dialog not immediately relevant to the subject of the Hoes' extravagance are omitted. Again, the characters have what life they have in virtue of that principle; one accepts them, or does not, as good examples of lower class improvidence. In consequence, any judgment on the book as a true creation in fiction is of secondary interest; the question is, how far is its thesis true? Lack of mortal prudence is, certainly, a grave defect; and a system which, through advertising, in the press and on the air, encourages careless spending is economically and morally unsound. But in preaching, indirectly, the worth of thrift, Miss Lawrence also seems to be preaching the advisability of "knowing one's place." Now "knowing one's place" is not a bad thing if one's place is dictated by reason or by a respected authority, but when it is decided by a capitalism whose motto is "Excelsior!" it is unreasonable and comes from no authority at all. It is a moral condition of the slave state. Perhaps this is not implicit in Miss Lawrence's argument, and we can commend her for preaching thrift, even if thrift alone will not solve the problem which faces the Hoes of this land.

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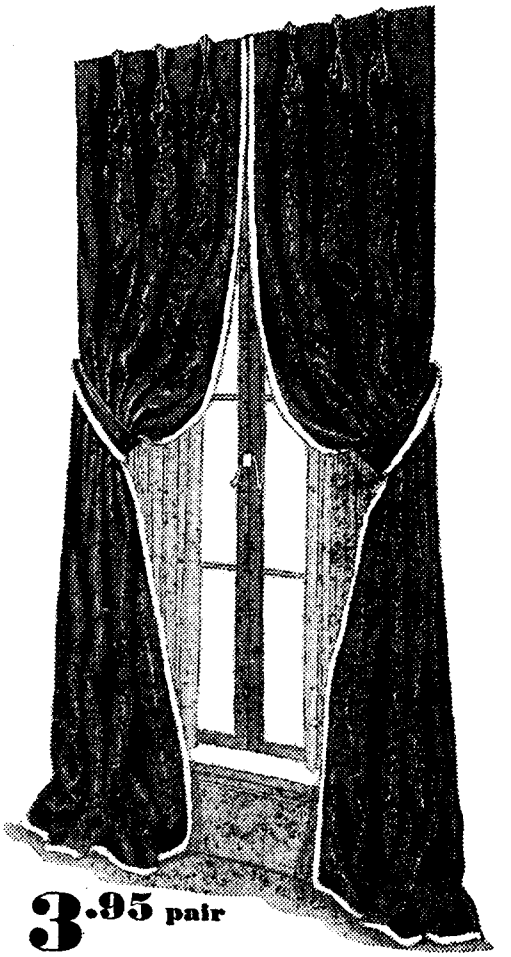

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Next Week

WHAT IS COOPERATION, by Philip Burnham, describes very interestingly and, in a brief space, inclusively the practical aspects of consumer, producer and credit cooperatives, both here and abroad. In the first five years of the depression, consumer cooperatives have increased their sales in the United States by 40 percent to over $1,000,000 worth of goods a day and Mr. Burnham indicates that they will with prosperity greatly add to their momentum. He discusses Fascist and Communist critiques of the cooperative movement and what these systems, where they have gained power, have done to the cooperatives, and quotes authoritative Catholic statements. . . . THE WAY OF AN EMIGRANT, by Johann Martinus, a German priest in exile, tells of the numbers and difficult lot of the German Catholics who have been driven from their homes and their livelihoods by Nazi persecution. They are too apt to find, he says, "that Jews and Marxists help one another, and that Catholics do not." . . . ALL IN A DAY'S WORK, by an anonymous elementary school teacher with twenty years of apparently pretty strenuous experience, recounts the round of her duties, in the teaching of varied subjects and in extra-curricular activities, a round embracing everything from mathematics and literature, to carpentry and cooking, disciplining the boisterous, charity, psychiatry and encouraging and stimulating the interests of parents as well as the children. Teaching eleven different subjects to an average of thirty-five children, is hard, she finds, but it is extra-curricular duties which threaten most to bankrupt her fund of energy. . . . SILVER JUBILEE, by Robert E. Brennan, brilliantly vignettes the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome, which has just celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, against a background of the history of Catholic sacred music.

Heritors of Medievalism

The Founding of Harvard College, by Samuel Eliot Morison. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. $5.00.

PROFESSOR MORISON, who has written right nobly about American history, records the pleasure he has found in exploring the "narrow subject" of Harvard's past. His enjoyment is reflected in this, the first of several volumes which will eventually bring the story as far as the accession of President Eliot. If the chronicle gets better as it goes along, the history of education in the United States will be rich, indeed, so memorable for both interest and insight is this beginning.

It did not take the author long to see that Harvard was the result of an effort to transplant humanistic training to the United States. The men of that time were heritors of the medieval university; and though they changed some things, tampering with the essential structure would have seemed to them outrageous. Therefore Professor Morison begins with a survey of the University of Paris, going on then—after an exposition which reveals clearly the educational temper of the Middle Ages—to those schools which more directly influenced Harvard. First on the list is Cambridge, from which so many early New England divines came, and next, perhaps, is the University of Edinburgh. A whole array of European institutions, among them Leyden, had a finger in the eventual Bostonian pie. This is no dull narrative for anyone; but it will doubtless be particularly attractive for those of us who care to find out how long the shadow of Scholasticism was. Of this the retention of the "commencement disputations" was only one part, and possibly the most notable single item was the emphasis upon theology as the mistress of sciences, even if it was no longer the theology of the old Church. Some of Professor Morison's remarks on this subject are a bit strange, but he has made a valiant effort to grasp the subtleties of Divinity.

The founding of Harvard was a complex, troubled business which had its amusing sides. Professor Morison takes due note of the fact that cattle raising was at first the primary avocation of Cambridge residents, who thus got, no doubt, a faint analogy to the fumes of hell so often discussed by them. But bringing up youngsters turned out to be equally difficult, and it is worth noting that the first serious dispute at the new college was about discipline. One large chapter is entitled "The Quest for Revenue," which begins by noting that the great John Dunster's personal wants of a private and presidential sort "were relieved by marrying the widow Glover in 1641"; and for some time thereafter the community evidently considered the widow substantial enough. Yet purses were eventually opened up, and in telling about that now the historian affords an excellent chance to look deep into the economic and educational outlook of our forefathers.

I believe that religious educators cannot afford to neglect this book, so direct is the connection between it and their own tradition. But everyone will find it pleasant reading in its own scholarly way, being neither afraid of anecdote nor too proud to think aloud.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

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What Is Culture?

The Threat to European Civilization, by Ludwig Freund. New York: Sheed and Ward. $1.50.

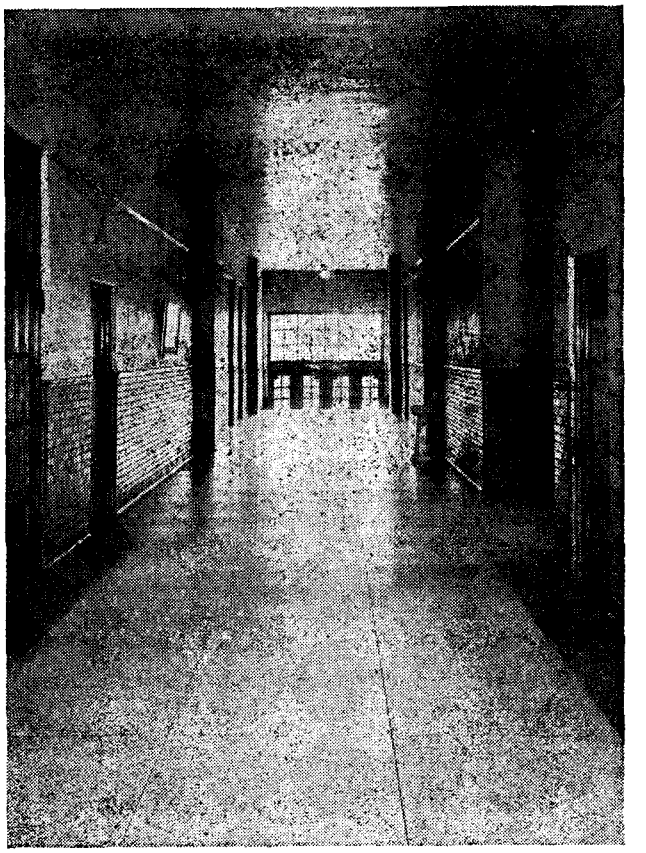
DR. FREUND, former director of the Jewish Ex-Soldiers' League in Germany, and now resident in this country, here sets forth his analysis of the dangers that beset European civilization, and his conclusions as to the means of saving it, if it is to be saved at all.

The "threat" to European culture lies in the mental, social and political confusion which has grown out of the secularization of thought and life in Europe, and which reveals itself in nationalistic, racialistic and class philosophies of society and the state, in group antagonisms within and between nations, and in despotism and radicalism. This breakdown of the cultural unity of Europe Dr. Freund traces to the divorce of religion from secular affairs. He sees the sole salvation for European civilization in the return, not simply of religion in general, but of Catholicism, to "the control of the whole of life." This thesis is familiar to readers of recent Catholic writers on the subject; but it is encouraging to read so convinced a statement of it by a prominent non-Catholic thinker.

A more fundamental criticism from the Catholic point of view must bear on certain of Dr. Freund's assumptions regarding the nature and historical development of Catholicism. The author holds that primitive Christianity consisted in the renunciation of earthly power and wealth. This "primitiveness" was corrupted by the contact of Christianity with Roman imperialism, out of which grew the Church, organized, rich and powerful. This "fundamental contradiction" between "the possession by the Church of physical powers and property" and "the Christian ordinances inculcating contempt of power and wealth" introduced into European culture the "irreconciliable contradictions" between "humility and aggrandizement, charity and brute force, belief in a life to come and the enjoyment of earthly pleasures": whence the confusion and "stigma of hypocrisy" that cling to European civilization.

Equally to be noted is what seems to be Dr. Freund's idea of the primitive Christian faith: "the renunciation of critical perception and furthermore the renunciation of every kind of interior knowledge such as claimed by the Gnostics and mystics." It was therefore a purely passive and unreasoning acceptance of authoritative teaching, and was summed up in Tertullian's apothegm, "Credo quia absurdum est." This primitive attitude of faith was corrupted by the infiltration of Greek philosophy into Christian thinking. Thence was born theology, "the attempt to demonstrate by logic what is divine, distant and inexplicable": the faith of Tertullian was supplanted by the faith of Augustine—"Credo ut intelligam." Rationalism, scepticism, Protestantism, disunity, and the divorce of religion from secular thought and life, all grew out of this subjection of transcendental dogmas to critical thought.

Now there is unquestionably more than a grain of truth in these views as Dr. Freund substantiates them; but as a fundamental concept of Christianity they are at fault. They do not recognize the organic relation of the Church,



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with its organization, its social life, and even its property, to Christianity as a spiritual and other-worldly religion: nor do they admit the equally organic relation between Revelation and theology, which is not an attempt to demonstrate and rationalize transcendental truth, but a means of bringing the truths of Revelation within the reach of human thought, and of integrating them into the unified body of human knowledge. Tertullian's "Credo quia absurdum," taken literally and alone, is absurd, like most paradoxes. Saint Augustine's "Credo ut intelligam" is intelligible, because it implies the essential reasonableness of the doctrines of faith, which guide and complete thought while transcending its natural processes.

This defective, although by no means unsympathetic, view of essential Christianity leads Dr. Freund to some highly debatable notions on the process by which the Church should undertake to save Europe. He does not say that the Church should dissolve herself, although that might appear to be the logical conclusion from his premises: but she must return to the "primitiveness" of poverty and renunciation, and "free the Faith from the accretions of criticism and from every kind of philosophy and speculation." Having thus purged herself of corruptive Roman and Greek influences, she can attract the youth of Europe with the "radical program" which alone appeals to them; she can "denounce the lying and the guilt of modern leaders, states, and political systems," and inculcate the "doctrine of the inevitable collapse of material possession." She will also be able to recapture the control of life as a whole, because she will once more have put her transcendental doctrines beyond the reach of intellect and reason.

In sum, if I read him aright, Dr. Freund seems to invite a return to the spiritual condition of the pagan world of the third century, with which the modern situation already presents so many marked analogies. Then the late Greek religious philosophies and the oriental mystery-religions imbued the West with a faith that fled from reason and an other-worldliness that fled from life. Now the Church is to set up a sort of oriental despotism, not of the civic life only, but of the mind. Nothing could seemingly be farther from the intrinsic possibilities either of Catholic Christianity or of western culture. The foundation of the traditional Catholic view of life in its totality is the principle that there can be and should be harmony between faith and reason, between revealed truth and empirical knowledge, between the possession and use of earthly goods and the search after the Kingdom of God. On that foundation the Church built a civilization in Europe. It is not likely or possible that she would seek another foundation on which to reconstruct it.

WILLIAM GRANGER RYAN.

What Chaucer Read

The Education of Chaucer, by George A. Plimpton. New York: Oxford University Press. $2.00.

A LOVER and collector of manuscripts holds the secret of sympathy with the past. The handling of old books, especially of those made in the days of pen and

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ink, requires patience, insight and the power of imaginative reconstruction. Mr. Plimpton has traced through the manuscripts in his own library the influences that made Chaucer the man and poet that he was, influences which came from ages remote even to the fourteenth century. And Chaucer can still influence our own days, if we are not too busy to let him speak to us. Mr. Plimpton places in our hands, in a simple, matter-of-fact form, information as to the education of Chaucer which will make our reading of his poetry more intelligent.

For this purpose he presents facsimilies of many of his rarer manuscripts, and although the old script is difficult reading for any but a trained paleographer, the very sight of it is cultural in its effect, for it gives one a realization of the price that was paid for learning in the days of laborious and beautiful hand-work. He gives a concise account of the value of each book, and of the part it played in the making of the civilizations of then and now. The lists of Chaucerian references at the end are statistical, but the figures are eloquent to the scholar and should prove helpful to the teacher. The book, brief as it is, gives the impression that a leisured and very human love of letters has gone into its making.

M. W.

A Prophet

Mission de Léon Bloy, by Stanislaus Fumet. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer et Cie.

FEW MEN have been so egocentric in their writings and at the same time so universal as Léon Bloy. Few have been able to write in such a way that the merest line from their pen has been treasured as of incomparable worth by those to whom they have been addressed. Consequently the amount of accumulated material from which to judge the man, the artist, the Christian, the devout Catholic, can scarcely be duplicated in any other case. Volumes upon volumes of letters have been published: letters to his fiancée, to his godchildren, Jacques Maritain, Pierre Van Der Meer De Walcheren, to Pierre Termier, to René Martineau and many, many others.

Fumet in this work has analyzed the mission of Léon Bloy, attempting as he says, "to recover the thought underlying his writings, by stripping it of the literary wrappings which might obscure the true meaning." He shows us "the suffering Christian, the poor men in revolt, the misunderstood artist," but all this is exterior; underneath we are led to see the "formidable enthusiast, somewhat drunken indeed with the blood of the Mass, to whom Creation's voice, palpitating with hope, produces on him as it were the effect of sounding bells."

The providential nature of Bloy's mission is made unmistakably clear. "Without him," says Fumet, "some of us might perhaps still be in darkness. We might not have seen the Church as the unique haven of safety, while the 'discouraging aspect of modern Christians' who obstruct the portals, might have hid from us the entrance to the beatific Mansion, had not Bloy, as a sort of providential Sampson, opened through them a passage for us."

ELIZABETH S. KITE.

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Temptation

Murder in the Cathedral, by T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.25.

"MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL," the play of T. S. Eliot performed at Canterbury Cathedral last year, and successfully running in a London theatre this winter, is poetically and intellectually the most reassuring work which that suspect seer has published in a long time. The form of poetic drama is thoroughly successful, the verses strong and sustaining, the Eliot modernism integrated into a dignified unity. Such reminiscent ironicisms as the Knights' speeches of defense after the murder are brought into the whole, and the various really magnificent lines and phrases that are always expected to stand out in Eliot's poetry, are found to be there at second reading. The drama is a strange, inner drama with a peculiarly depressing gloom until its subtle resolution. Its meaning is found by following the Chorus. Thomas meets the four tempters, who offer secure worldly pleasantness, power with the king—"Temporal power, to build a good world to keep order, as the world knows order"—and secular power over against the king, and finally: "The last temptation is the greatest treason: To do the right deed for the wrong reason." While this more personal part goes on, the Chorus is showing what the business means to ordinary men: why the martyrdom is a drama to the old women, no matter how much they wish to avoid it and action and suffering. The Chorus is very Catholic, understanding much of the unity of mankind, the priestly position and what the Church is.

A Poetic Genius

The Browning Box or the Life and Works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes; edited with an Introduction by H. W. Donner. New York: Oxford University Press. $5.00.

THOUGH the "Browning Box" with its information concerning one of the strangest of all English poetic geniuses has been lost, enough was transcribed to form the basis for Mr. Donner's interesting collection of letters and memoirs. From it one can piece together not a biography of Beddoes but at least the same impression of him that those who knew him best in life were able to gather. The introduction, with sketches of Beddoes, Proctor, Bourne and Kelsall, is a distinguished bit of biographical writing.

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